



Bristol Animal News

BRISTOL DOGS & CATS HOME AND RSPCA BRISTOL CLINIC NEWSLETTER

2011 Winter Warmer Appeal

It is that time of year again when everyone here at Bristol Dogs and Cats Home are busy preparing for the cold winter months ahead. Last winter was particularly harsh and we are expecting no less this winter.

Every year at this time, we launch our Winter Warmer Appeal, asking you, our supporters, to lend us a helping hand over the winter period by donating a tin of food, old blanket or whatever change you can spare. These generous donations, no matter how big or small make a huge difference to the lives of animal in our care.

We understand that the financial climate has hit everyone and giving can be especially hard. Last year's appeal was considerably less prosperous than in previous years meaning that the food did not reach as far through the year. With over 200 hungry mouths to feed at any time, our annual food bill would total a staggering £52,000 without this appeal, so please, whatever you can give, even just one tin could mean one less hungry tummy this Christmas!

*“Please donate now,
just text WARM22
and the amount
to 70070”*

We are particularly in need of tinned food as opposed to dried food and biscuits, as storing a lot of dried food can attract biscuit mites and beetles. We also need blankets to provide our cats and dogs with a warm bed to snuggle up in. Any monetary donations towards heating costs are also very welcome.



You can contribute to the appeal by dropping off your donations at one of our many collection points around Bristol (in shops, supermarkets and veterinary practices etc).

Alternatively, donations can be taken to the RSPCA Bristol Branch Charity Shop on Gloucester Road or directly to Bristol Dogs & Cats Home in St. Philips. Financial contributions can also be sent directly to us or you can make a donation right now via your mobile phone – just text WARM22 and the amount (ie, WARM22 £10) to 70070. Alternatively you can make a secure on-line donation at www.justgiving.com/WWAppeal2011 and are always gratefully received.

Bristol Dogs & Cats Home, an integral part of the RSPCA Bristol & District Branch, provides care, shelter and a re-homing service for nearly 2,000 unwanted dogs, cats and small animals every year. Although affiliated to the RSPCA, the Bristol Branch is an independent charity

which receives no funding from the National RSPCA, Government or Lottery.

If your workplace would like to get involved by hosting a Winter Warmer Appeal collection box, please call 0117 3003968 or e-mail rebecca@rspca-bristol.org.uk

**Please help us and together
we can keep toes toasty and
tummies full this Winter!**



**Remember, Remember
the 5th of November...**

...but don't forget your pet!

Fireworks are a great source of celebration for us but unfortunately our pets don't necessarily share that same feeling. The loud bangs and bright lights can scare your furry friend so it is vital that you take precaution in order to protect your pet. For more information, please visit our website.



As many of you know, our Clinic provides a round-the-clock emergency service for injured and ill wildlife. Due to the lack of a similar service for many miles, these casualties come not just from the Bristol RSPCA Branch area, but sometimes from much further afield.

This young cygnet was rescued on the far side of Bath by Carl Hone, one of the National RSPCA's Animal

A tale of troublesome tackle

Welfare Officers, after reports from the public alerting them to its distress. Yet again a water bird had become victim to discarded fishing tackle – in this case a long thin float was hanging from the cygnet's beak.

Carl knew the cygnet would get immediate care at the RSPCA Bristol Clinic, and after a quick trip up the M4, the bird was being assessed by our duty vet. As expected, there was line from the float disappearing down the cygnet's oesophagus (food pipe) and as always in these cases the worry was whether there was a fishing hook down there. If there was, it could be embedded in the wall of the oesophagus, making things very tricky indeed.

The cygnet was anaesthetised for x-rays to determine the state of play with swallowed fishing tackle. In this instance they showed a small lead weight, but no obvious hook, so the

vet felt able to very gently pull on the line to see if it moved easily. Luckily it did and the line was slowly withdrawn and eventually a large clump of vegetation appeared on the end. Bingo! Problem solved, on this occasion, with no need for surgery.

The cygnet was placed on an intravenous drip and went to our Intensive Care Unit to recuperate. By the next day he was extremely bright, eating and drinking well – all good signs that there was no lasting damage. Unfortunately, as there had been no sighting of his parents at the time of his rescue, we couldn't be sure they were there. This little chap was still a bit young to fend for himself, so couldn't go back to Bath on his own. Instead he was transferred down to the RSPCA West Hatch Wildlife Hospital in Somerset to do some much-needed growing up before he could be released.

One Kitten supports another!

Back at the beginning of August, in the height of 'kitten season', we were lucky enough to gain the support of a very famous kitten, **Liz McClarnon!**

We had over 60 cats at the centre, with both BDCH and the Clinic (acting as an overflow) being full to capacity. Healthy cats and kittens were taking up vital space needed by injured and ill animals. With so many unwanted litters being born every year we strongly advise owners to neuter their cats. Sadly, these unwanted kittens are beginning to be, literally, treated like rubbish – like little Skippy, an 8 week old kitten who had a lucky escape in July. He was found by workers at a waste management plant as the box he had been dumped in was crushed in a skip. He was able to jump to safety at the last moment but sadly his brothers and sisters did not survive.

Liz McClarnon, former member of the pop group, Atomic Kitten,

visited us to lend her support to our appeal for help.

"I was very sad to hear from Bristol Dogs and Cats Home that so many kittens in the area are unwanted and that some people can be so heartless in abandoning them, like Skippy. It's just so unnecessary when great rescue centres like this are there to rehome them. If only people would get their pets neutered in the first place, this would avoid all the unwanted pregnancies".

We were very grateful for Liz's support as the situation reaches critical levels every year with an influx of animals and a reduction in potential homers as they wait until after the summer holidays.

We would plead with anybody thinking about getting a cat or kitten to approach cat rescue organisations rather than private breeders. People who buy cats unfortunately create a market which encourages the breeding of



Liz McClarnon with Skippy

cats for profit, and there simply aren't enough good homes to go around.

A video of Liz's visit to our centre can be seen on YouTube - <http://youtu.be/yG3fjxbOTFw>

photo courtesy swins

Benjamin Button's Happy Ending

On 23rd May, Dog Warden Mark Coombs came across a Staffordshire Bull Terrier that had been found wandering around Brislington. The dog was emaciated (weighing just 9kgs), suffering from an untreated skin condition and had a bad ear infection.

On arrival Benji Button, as he was later named by staff, was rushed straight to our Clinic. His condition was so poor that, had an owner come forward to claim him, they would've been prosecuted. Benji had been badly abused by someone. He was immediately treated for his skin condition and he was fed regular small meals to build up his weight.

After only one week at BDCH, Benjamin was starting to gain weight and his skin was showing improvement. It soon became apparent that Benji had a lovely personality; even after all he had gone through. He became a firm favourite with staff.

Unfortunately no one claimed responsibility for Benji, so we could not prosecute his previous owner for their wanton cruelty. However, Benji was now safe and happy in our kennels and was receiving the care he needed.

After only a few months Benji Button was ready to find a new home; his weight had reached 16kgs and he was a fit and friendly dog, loving everyone he met. It therefore didn't take him long to be chosen by a family and he has blossomed into a very handsome dog.



Join us at our Christmas Fair

Christmas Carolers, gorgeous gifts, mince pies and mulled drinks all await at Bristol Dogs and Cats Home's Christmas Fair on Saturday 19th November. Join us to launch the festive season in style, fabulous fun for the whole family!

With stalls selling seasonal gifts, very merry traditional family games, tasty treats and even a chance to chat with Santa who will be taking a break from the North Pole in our grotto, we'll have it all so please do come along. Doors open at 10am and entrance is 50p for adults and for children it's free! Enjoy the festive fun with BDCH this winter!

A Book of Blankets

Mrs. Derrick's needles haven't stopped crocheting since the late 1970's, creating blankets for the comfort of Bristol Dogs & Cats Home residents. Her selfless good deeds have been celebrated in a handmade limited edition book, by Bristol based Artist, Angie Butler. A beautiful collection of silkscreen, letterpress and digital prints, revealing the journey that the blankets make at the end of each month, aided by Volunteers, to the Residents of the Dogs and Cats Home. Some of whom are

featured, looking rather cosy and warm on their new blankets.

A copy of this delightful book (worth £80) has been donated by Angie, for the raffle at our Christmas Fair to raise funds for the Bristol Dogs & Cats Home. Mrs. Derrick is still busy crocheting. Donations of wool gratefully received by her local Hair Salon, Miss Carol, Church Road, St. George. More interesting art projects by Angie Butler at www.petgalerie.co.uk

Gifts with a Difference

Christmas is coming and with it the terror of what to get Auntie Flo who has everything. Well fear no more as we have the answer. Our 'Alternative Christmas Gifts' offer unique gift solutions whilst helping the animals in our care! Please visit our website, pick up a flyer or call us on 0117 3003968 for more information.

Summer Prize Draw

Thank you to all who entered this year's draw! The winners were drawn on 30th September (after we went to print) so please visit our website for more information.

Intensive Care Appeal Update

You may recall from the Spring edition of Bristol Animal News, the launch of our Intensive Care Appeal, raising money for the provision of essential equipment for our Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The Appeal has done well raising approximately £2,500 so far allowing us to buy 2 infusion pumps (£1600), 2 infusion warmers (£400), 3 kennel mounted drip stands (£300), 2 heat pads (£80) and a roll of Vetbed (£120). Thanks to your generosity we are now better equipped to provide the best possible care to these highest risk and seriously ill patients, giving them the greatest chance for survival.

One such animal was little Albus, a tabby cat brought to us in August. He had been found near Sainsbury's in Emerson's Green with very severe injuries to his right foreleg.

His injuries were already a few days old and had become infected. His paw was very swollen and there were severe deep cuts and a large wound extending all the way around his leg. The most likely cause for these injuries was that he got caught up in barbed wire or even razor wire. Sadly the damage was too severe for the leg to be saved so we had to amputate it.

We weren't able to operate straight away as Albus was too poorly with a high temperature and quite depressed. He was therefore hospitalised in ICU. He received various treatment - 2 different kinds of antibiotics to fight the infection, pain relief & an i/v drip using the

infusion pump, essential to make sure fluid is delivered at the correct rate for a small cat. After 3 days his temperature had returned to normal and he was much brighter. Thankfully he tested negative for FIV and Feline Leukaemia Virus so was ready for surgery.

After his operation he was closely monitoring in ICU immediately and continued receiving pain relief. After only 24 hours Albus was bright, active and eating. He is a lovely little chap and does not seem to be at all bothered by his new tripod status. Albus is now looking for that special new home.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported the appeal so far. As you can see, every penny really does count, helping us to provide the life saving care to the most vulnerable of animals, giving them the chance for a brighter future.

If you would like to make a donation towards the appeal, please call Rebecca on 0117 3003968, text CARE26 and the amount (ie, CARE26 £5) to 70070 or you can make a secure on-line donation at www.justgiving.com/ICUAppeal.



Albus after his operation



Vet bed in use



Can you take on the BIG DROP?

Are you prepared to go over the edge for animals in need at RSPCA Bristol Branch and Bristol Dogs and Cats Home? Well here is your opportunity to show your support for the thousands of the animals who depend on us every year. Take a leap into the unknown with our sponsored abseil challenge, and raise much needed funds for the thousands of unwanted animals that rely on us each year.

The Challenge event is taking place on Sunday 13th November with various time slots available to suit everyone. Descending the Selfstore Self Storage Bristol building at Ashton Gate, this will be a greater and more unique challenge than our last abseil from Avon Gorge. This iconic Bristol building (the one with 'Happy Christmas' lights on the roof) is higher, at 75ft / 8 stories, and will afford you fantastic views of the wintry City and Ashton Court.

This challenge is open to anyone, of any age - our last abseil attracted supporters aged 16 - 67 years old!

What a scorcher!

Summer 2011 will mainly be remembered for being the coldest in nearly 2 decades but thankfully and by some good fortune, our Dog Show and Fun Day was bathed in glorious sunshine! The event which took place at Whitehall Rugby Football Club in June and raised over £3,800 for the animals in our care.

A combination of a great location and weather created a wonderful atmosphere. Visitors, with their furry friends in tow, had the chance to browse the array of stalls, join in with some games (human and doggy!) and sample some tasty treats whilst listening to entertaining music performed by Paulton Concert Band.

With games ranging from Teddy Tombola to Human Fruit Machine

and the Doggy Games to Flyball (provided by Somerset Scrumpys Flyball team) both our 2 legged and four legged visitors had plenty to entertain themselves. Not to mention the Dog Show itself with classes such as Waggiest Tail and Best Veteran. Congratulations to all those who won rosettes!

A big thank you to volunteers, sponsors and organisations that supported the event, without their dedication, this event couldn't take place.

Please Note: This event will now take place biannually, alternating with our Open Day. So look out for the Open Day, taking place in summer 2012!



photo courtesy of Dan Miller Photography

Super Sperring!

On September 11th one of our Veterinary nurses Nicky donned her running shoes and took part in the Bristol Half Marathon. Dressed up as iconic 80s cartoon hero 'Super Ted', Nicky hoped to use her 'magical powers' to whiz through the course raising as much money as she could for animals in need along the way.

Nicky only started running this year, completing her first half marathon back in March and quickly



Nicky as Super Ted!

picking up the 'running bug'! Her reasons for taking up this form of exercise were not that unusual; wanting to get fit and lose weight whilst raising funds for our Intensive Care Appeal. However, speaking to Nicky we found out a little bit more to her running motive. Whilst pregnant with her second child Tilly, Nicky, like most women, got a craving... for

custard, and lots of it! She told us 'I just couldn't get enough of it - custard tarts, custard pies and even drinking custard straight from the tin but unfortunately it did do any good for my weight'. Another reason close to her heart was our very own Intensive Care Appeal, Nicky explained how she loves Intensive Care nursing, seeing critically ill animals pull through. She has so far raised over £200 which is just fantastic for such a worthwhile cause.

Having completed the Bristol Half in a commendable 2 hrs 57 (thanks to the particular support of Jules Carey-CNA at the clinic and her dad), Nicky is now looking to finish her first full marathon in Loch Ness on 2nd October. She is already running 4 times a week completing around 34 miles so she's well on the way to achieving her next goal. Loch Ness has quickly become one of Britain's favourite races and is arguably the most appealing of any marathon taking in beautiful Highland Scenery which should spur Nicky on! Either that or a few tins of custard at the finishing line!

We all wish Nicky the very best of luck and if you would like to sponsor her in this amazing feat, then please go to www.justgiving.com/Nichola-Sperring0 or you can text CARE26 and the amount (ie, CARE26 £5) to 70070.

There is no registration fee, all we ask is that you pledge to raise £75 (or more!) sponsorship for us. All participants will receive a free t-shirt and the person who raises the most for RSPCA Bristol Branch and Bristol Dogs and Cats Home will win a delicious meal for 2 courtesy of Café Rouge on Park Street, Bristol!

For more information or to register for the challenge please contact us on 0117 3003968 or email rebecca@rspca-bristol.org.uk. Alternatively please download a registration pack from our website.

Thank You!

We would like to convey our sincere thanks to all our supporters who have taken the time to carry out entertaining and interesting ways to help raise much needed funds for our charity - enabling us to continue to give every animal the quality of life they deserve.

As you can imagine we are unable print everyone's achievements however we hope you take pleasure in reading about just some of the individuals and groups that have helped animals in need over the last 6 months.

A big thank you to Isabel Creed who selflessly decided she didn't need any birthday presents this year and instead wanted her family and friends to join her at a fundraising party, donating a fantastic £150!

Shaye Wotherspoon spent a quiet day (literally) last March for a very good cause. From the minute she woke up to the moment she went to sleep, her sponsored silence was not only of the auditory kind – she also stayed away from texting, facebook and all other tempting social media! She raised a fantastic £230, well done Ssshhhh-aye!

This summer Year 1 pupils at St Teresa's School raised a super £30 by holding a cake sale at school. Sounds like a very yummy way to raise much needed funds!

Feeling energetic, Dave Lees took on the Snowdon challenge - hiking to



the top to raise a mountainous £250! Gwneud yn dda! If you would like to take on your own hiking challenge, we can offer UK based Trekathons - check out our website for more information.

We would like to thank Paul Roberts Hi-Fi for their continued support. Once again they have donated the top prize for our Summer Draw - a music system worth £350!



The exercise yard opening

Valued Volunteers

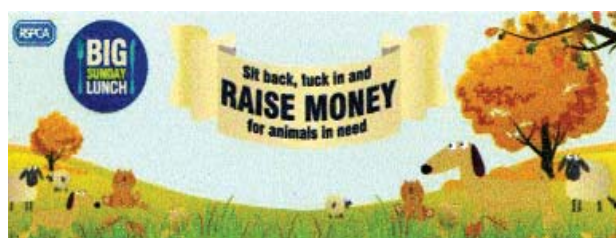
Volunteers play a very important role in our organisation, from walking the dogs and helping at our events to staffing our charity shop on Gloucester Road.

In 2001 one dedicated volunteer and a few friends wanted to do something to raise money to buy some new rabbit cages for the Home. They therefore decided to organise a coffee morning at the Dogs Home which was so successful they decided to do another, and then another...

Ten years later and while the group has grown a little, our Volunteer Fundraising Team are still organising bi-monthly coffee mornings which each raise around £600! Along with coffee mornings, the volunteers arrange other events such as afternoon teas at their homes, quiz nights and garage sales; again all monies are pooled together to aid worthy projects. This year over £4,200 has been raised which is a fantastic achievement. So far this year their fundraising has paid for the new flooring to re-vamp the Exercise Yard at the Dogs Home. It was previously a bit of a sand-pit but this has been replaced with a more hygienic and durable surface.

The next project they are working towards is the replacement of the 20 year old heating system in Frome Kennel. We are certain the Frome residents will be incredibly grateful to the volunteers especially if we experience a winter like last year! A huge thank you to our Volunteer Fundraising Team for all their hard work and support.

BIG SUNDAY LUNCH



A new mass participation event called RSPCA's Big Sunday Lunch will be taking place on Sunday 30th October. The Big Sunday Lunch is all about families and friends coming together to enjoy some delicious food whilst raising money for animals in need.

The concept is simple- families or groups of friends host a Sunday lunch in their homes and ask for a donation from each lunch guest. One lunch could raise as much as £40! There is no fixed number of people that can take part so each host can make up their mind as to how many guests they invite and how much they ask for them to donate!

Each host will need to register on-line (www.bigsundaylunch.co.uk) to access lots of fun stuff including downloadable invitation cards, place cards, recipes etc. Although money will be paid in centrally, participants need to select their local branch (ie Bristol Branch) so not only will all promotional material contain the correct name of the branch but the funds raised will come to us!

Pass the gravy!

Making a difference where you live!

NatWest CommunityForce is a new initiative where they're working with local communities to support the people, projects and charities making a real difference where you live.

We have submitted an application to them for funding to help with our injured and ill strays project – helping to provide care for those that cannot help themselves.

Check out our project at <http://goo.gl/yL86g>

From September everyone will be able to vote for their favourite projects. The three projects with the most votes in each CommunityForce area will win the awards.

Voting opened on 26 September and will close on 23 October 2011 - so vote for us now and ask everyone you meet to vote too!



Liz McClarnon with Harold

On Sale NOW!



Feast your eyes on our new range of Charity Christmas cards featuring our very own George the rabbit, Rosie, Posie and Ronnie the kittens and Stanley the Staffie!

Our chosen models spent the day with experts from Eternal Photography with fabulous results. The cards are on sale from the Dogs Home, the Branch office and our charity shop on Gloucester Road. Alternatively you can download a mail-order form from our website. All proceeds go towards animals in our care this Christmas.



A Home for Harold

In May a very poorly Victorian Bulldog was found straying and brought to BDCH. He was around 3 years old and suffering from numerous health problems. He had a prolapsed eye and conjunctivitis, infected ears, a wound on his neck and had a lame front leg. We started immediate treatment to prevent him from further suffering, administering painkillers, antibiotics and an array of creams and ointments to help his skin and feet. A couple of months and two operations later, he is now looking for a loving new home where he can start again.

Now named Harold, he has a lovely temperament, enduring months of treatment without even a growl of complaint. He is a fantastic dog, who is good with other dogs and excellent with children. He loves everyone that he meets, rolling over so that his belly can be rubbed (his favourite!).

Due to his previous health issues, Harold is receiving ongoing veterinary care for his eyes, skin and ears. This treatment is likely to be a lifelong commitment.

We are looking to place Harold in a home that understands the cost implications of owning a dog with ongoing health problems, as he may be uninsurable. Any prospective owners will have to be able to pay for private vets fees for the rest of his life.

If you feel able to offer this special boy the home that he deserves, please get in touch for more information and to meet him.

Harold is a truly wonderful dog that has so much love to offer - one stroke and you'll be hooked!

Laundry Volunteers Needed

With up to 200 residents at the Home we desperately need help to keep their environment as clean as possible. Each animal whether dog, cat or ferret is provided with a warm blanket to snuggle up in which can quickly become dirty and damp. We are looking to recruit volunteers to join the laundry team and ensure our residents have a steady supply of clean and dry blankets.

Please call 0117 3003962 if you would like to help.

Dates for Your Diary

**Kathy's Coffee Mornings,
Bristol Dogs & Cats Home
Saturday 3rd December *Christmas Special*
Saturday 4th February**

Bi monthly coffee morning & sale - books, hand-made cards, home-made cakes, bric-a-brac, raffle & refreshments!

**World Animal Day
Tuesday 4 October**

Why not organise your own fundraising activity or event to celebrate World Animal Day and raise vital funds for your favourite animal welfare organisation (US!) at the same time? Maybe a coffee morning, sponsored silence, themed day in the office/school or cake sale? Request your free fundraising pack today for handy tips and ideas.

**The Big Sunday Lunch
Sunday 30th October**

RSPCA's Big Sunday Lunch is all about enjoying delicious food with friends and family whilst raising money for animals less fortunate. Host your own Big Sunday Lunch and request a donation from each lunch guest!

The BIG DROP!

Sunday 13th November, Selected time slots
Take a leap into the unknown with our sponsored abseil challenge, raising much needed funds for animals in need. Descending the Selfstore Self Storage Bristol building at Ashton Gate, you will have a fantastic view of the wintry City and Ashton Court. You could even win a meal for 2 at Café Rouge!

**Annual Christmas Fair,
Bristol Dogs & Cats Home**

Saturday 19th November, 10am – 2.30pm
A festive celebration that will be fun for the whole family. Christmas gifts, festive treats, Santa's Grotto, carol singing, games, refreshments and much more!

**Annual Spring Fair,
Bristol Dogs & Cats Home**

Saturday 24th March 2012, 10am - 2.30pm
A seasonal celebration that will be fun for the whole family. Gifts & goodies, kids crafts, games and refreshments.

For more information on any of these events please contact us on 0117 3003968 or email rebecca@rspca-bristol.org.uk

Rabbit Awareness Week – *because rabbits get a RAW deal*

You may remember in our last edition of *Animal News* we featured an article relating to Rabbit Awareness Week (RAW). Well back in June a group of our vets and nurses headed down to a local shopping centre dressed up in a rabbit outfit and took it in turns to be confined in a small hutch giving shoppers a graphic illustration of the plight of the neglected bunny.

Rabbits are very intelligent creatures and need to be kept busy and exercised in order to be emotionally healthy and happy. All too often they are confined to small hutches and not provided with enrichment, we therefore wanted to educate local owners on responsible rabbit ownership.

A recent study highlighted the plight of Britain's 1,669,000 rabbits with alarming figures such as 44% are not registered with a vet, 67% live alone and a neglected 6% never leave their hutch in their lifetime! 30% of



rabbit owners even confessed that owning rabbits is harder work than they had initially thought.

During June the branch also offered low-cost neutering. We hope that between this and the visit to the shopping centre we helped to educate and improve the health and welfare of Bristol's bunnies.

Sew much fun!

Some of our volunteers have started a sewing group, usually on Tuesdays between 1.30-4pm, to help turn donated duvets into new dog beds for the animals at the Home. If you are handy with a pair of shears or a whizz on a sewing machine and occasionally have a few hours to spare then please get in touch.

Contact Edna on
ed.culverhouse@hotmail.co.uk
for more information.

Now on Twitter and Facebook

We have now joined the Social Media revolution! You can now 'Follow' us on Twitter and 'Like' our page on Facebook to keep abreast of all our latest information and animal welfare news! Look for *Rspca Bristol Branch & Bristol Dogs and Cats Home* on Facebook and [@RSPCABristol](https://twitter.com/RSPCABristol) on Twitter.

