



RSPCA South London Branch
Registered Charity No. 276861

Website - www.rspcasouthlondon.org.uk

Email – enquiries@rspcasouthlondon.org.uk

Phone - 07548 840 934



RSPCA SOUTH LONDON NEWSLETTER

Issue Four - Spring 2023

Contents:

Editorial	Page 1
Up Coming Events	Page 1
AWO Interview	Page 2
Cats Make Kittens	Page 3
The Big Help Out	Page 3
Rabbits Come To Roost	Page 4
Your Opinion Counts	Page 4
Pets Memorial	Page 4

Please scan the QR code below or search Just Giving RSPCA South London if you would like to donate towards our work



Editorial

Welcome to the first RSPCA South London newsletter of 2023.

The year has started in hectic fashion with record numbers of cats coming into our care. The majority have been caused by owners not getting their cats neutered and ending up with unwanted litters. You can read about the benefits of getting your cats neutered on page 3.

Very excitingly we have taken in our first four rabbits in for fostering before we hopefully find a home for them. You can read all about the sizeable task we had to get our fostering off the ground in this newsletter.

Our Animal Welfare Officer Cheska has now been with us for six months and has been kept incredibly busy since she started. You can read an interview with Cheska on page 2.

With many people finding finances difficult in the current climate, we continue to regularly donate pet food to local foodbanks, and also offer help to owners by funding or discounting neutering & microchipping of dogs, cats & rabbits, as well as assisting qualifying owners with unexpected vet bills. [See our website for details.](#)

We also have set-up an Amazon Wishlist of items that we would like to use for animals that come into our care or who we find out are in need. Details of how you can help are on page 4.

Best wishes for a lovely Spring.

Will Linsdell, Editor



Events



We have several events in the pipeline. We would love to see you there.

Please see our website events page for full details and look out for alerts on our social media pages.

We're always looking for volunteers at our events, so if you'd like to get involved, please get in touch.

UPCOMING EVENTS

RSPCA Stand at Pets at Home Wimbledon over Easter.

RSPCA One Fun Day in various locations on 17th June

Tooting Common Fun Dog Show – date TBC

Croydon Pride 15th July

Donate Your Unwanted Items

We have a great need for quality unwanted items at our shops in Caterham, Croydon & Crystal Palace.

If you could donate any of the following items during our opening times that would be great ([see our website for details of addresses and trading times](#)):

- Clothing & footwear
- Small electrical appliances
- Glassware & giftware
- Toys & games
- Jewellery
- Household goods
- Interesting objects
- Books, CD & vinyl records
- Paintings
- Pet accessories

Cheska recently took some time out of her busy schedule to answer a few of our questions



Tell us a little bit about yourself

I grew up in Croydon and I pursued a career with animals by studying Animal Management as a BTEC and then heading to university to study a Zoology undergraduate degree. I then volunteered and worked at a zoo with reptiles and amphibians for 11 years!

How long have you been working for the RSPCA?

I started my role as Animal Welfare Officer in September 2022, so it's been about seven months so far. It actually feels like it's been a lot longer, it's hard to remember a time where I wasn't working for this RSPCA branch!

Why did you want to work for the RSPCA in South London?

While the conservation work being done by the zoo was important and I loved contributing to it, I felt that it was time for something new. I knew I wanted to work for another charity organisation, but in a more active role where I could have more autonomy and complete work that was more instantly rewarding. I looked for a while for a role that suited what I was looking for and I eventually found the job position for Animal Welfare Officer!

One of the downsides of wanting a career with animals is that there aren't limitless jobs to choose from within each specialty group of animals, however I am very lucky that I grew up with a fascination and love of all animals. For me, moving from conserving reptiles and amphibians to caring for the domestic animals in our branch area was a no brainer!

What are your responsibilities?

Overall my responsibilities are to protect and promote the welfare of animals, but within my job this is broken down into many parts.

I respond to animal welfare issues reported to me via the branch manager and the inspectorate team, and this could be picking up sick, injured and abandoned/unwanted animals and taking them to boarding facilities or the vets.

Once the animals are in our care, I am then responsible for organising their vet appointments; for standalone health issues or to help them get ready for the adoption process.

Some animals also require specialist help, such as nervous cats in foster care where I might need to loop in a behaviourist, or feral cats in our care who I might need to help find a specialist home for.

My responsibilities are very varied and range across transport, fundraising, record keeping, social media, monitoring, taking calls from the public, and volunteering any spare time to help the inspectorate team.....

What aspects of your job, if any, do you dislike?

It's hard to think of something I dislike about this job because I really am over the moon with it! I guess the hardest part for me has been discovering that legally there isn't a lot that can be done to get animals out of unhygienic or potentially unsafe environments.

Although investigating homes isn't within my job role, I do sometimes visit people's houses and see subpar living conditions that the law currently views as acceptable. Hopefully over time the laws can be stricter so we can continue to improve the minimum standard that animals are kept at!

Do you have a message for our followers/supporters/volunteers?

It's been a real pleasure interacting with all our supporters and volunteers. It's so much fun being able to share our work on social media and to see everyone interact with the content because it really highlights the community we are a part of. It means the world to us when we can see our messages being shared and appreciated, and we hope that our supporters will help us to keep on growing!

I am also very grateful for those who volunteer for us, whether that's fosterers or those willing to lend a hand with driving and visiting foster cats.

What should the public be looking out for and what should they do if they believe the welfare of domestic pets or wildlife is in danger?

We are totally reliant on the public to be our eyes and ears in the communities. If they see or hear anything where they believe an animal is being harmed or neglected, they should ring us on our national number [03001234999](tel:03001234999).

Cats Make Kittens

That's pretty obvious of course, but unfortunately we are seeing something of a cat population explosion in recent times.

The reason for this is simple – owners are not getting their cats neutered.

Owners of tom cats may not care too much as they would not usually have to deal with a litter of unwanted kittens.



Five kittens born into our care recently

However, a tom cat will be far more aggressive and territorial if not neutered. This makes him pretty nailed on to fight other toms, so causing and receiving nasty injuries.

Untreated injuries can lead to all sorts of very horrible and expensive to treat complications, so the message is clear – get your tom neutered. It's the socially responsible thing to do too.

Getting your female cat neutered has obvious benefits. An unneutered female is extremely likely to become pregnant at a very young age.

Cats can reach sexual maturity and get pregnant at just four months of age (kittens can have kittens!).

Unplanned litters cause great heartache and headaches for owners. These unsuspecting owners often struggle - not only to find good homes for the kittens - but also to care for the mum and kittens in the early stages.

Help is at hand if you are struggling to afford to get your cat neutered. [Contact us using the details shown on page 1.](#)



Five kittens recently handed to us because their owners could not cope

The Big Help Out

To mark the coronation of King Charles III, May 8th has been declared as a day to highlight the social and well-being benefits of volunteering.



The RSPCA is one of the charities heavily involved. We have launched a role that anybody can apply for.

Be a Wildlife Friend to become a champion for wild animals and birds in your own home and wider community.

Last year the RSPCA was alerted to over 83,000 incidents involving wildlife. Sadly many of the incidents reported could have been prevented.

As an RSPCA Wildlife Friend you can help to spread RSPCA messages to the public about what to do if you find sick or injured wildlife where you live, and what everyone can do to prevent injuries in the first place.

You can also act yourself by following the RSPCA's tips to create habitats and environments where wildlife can thrive and be protected from harm.

Just search [RSPCA The Big Help Out](#) for details.

We are always on the look out for volunteers to join us in our shops, on fundraising events and at animal welfare activities.

Email us at enquiries@rspcasouthlondon.org.uk for more details of how you may be able to help us.

Volunteers and members recently joined us for a litter pick on Tooting Common.

We shifted a small mountain of rubbish, much of which could have polluted the natural habitat for scores of wildlife.

Something as harmless looking as a ring pull or a bottle top can kill, so we encourage everybody not to drop litter and if they do see it, pick it up and bin it if it is safe to do so.



RSPCA litter pick, Tooting Common
April 2023

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

RSPCA South London branch are responsible for animal welfare in much of the capital south of the river including Anerley, Balham, Croydon, Crystal Palace, Gipsy Hill, Mitcham, Norwood, Sydenham, Thornton Heath, Tooting, Wallington & Wandsworth.

We would really appreciate your views on how we can make sure South London has animal welfare at its heart.

Please let us know any ideas that you have for making sure all animals in the region are well looked after.



Every idea will be considered and responded to, so if you could spare a few minutes to have a think about the animal welfare situation where you live and how it might be improved, please let us know.

Please email us your suggestions at enquiries@rspcasouthlondon.org.uk

Amazon Wishlist

We have recently set up an Amazon Wishlist to help domestic animals in need in the South London area.

Items start from just a few pounds and if you were able to provide an item for a needy dog, cat, rabbit, or small furry animal it would be greatly appreciated.



A small selection of items

Please scan the QR code if you are able to help



RABBITS!

After many months of effort we are delighted to report that we have now taken in our first four rabbits for fostering.

Why so difficult we hear you ask!

Well, first of all the rabbit accommodation is very big. It measures 2 metres x 3 metres to comply with RSPCA approved specifications.

It took a while to find a fosterer who could designate sufficient space for the structure. It then took a few weeks to lay a concrete base, build the huge hutch and make sure it was predator proof by protecting the foundations.

When everything was ready, we took in four baby lion head rabbits, who we now being fostered as we look for permanent homes for them.

We think you will agree that they are super cute!



If you would like to adopt a pair of rabbits (we have 3 girls and a boy) or become a rabbit fosterer, please email us at enquiries@rspcasouthlondon.org.uk

Our Pets of the Memorial Page



Anybody that has ever owned a pet will know how wonderful it is to have an animal friend in their life. Many will also know the extreme pain of losing that friend.

This is why we have launched our **Pet Memorial Page** and we invite people living in South London to submit a photo of a beloved pet who is now waiting patiently for them at the Rainbow Bridge.

Just email a good quality photo and up to fifty words to enquiries@rspcasouthlondon.org.uk and we will post them to stay forever on our website.