



Annual review **2020**





Welcome to your 2020 *RSPCA Annual review*.
And what a year it was, for the RSPCA and
indeed for the whole world.

When COVID-19 hit, as always, our main priority was to continue protecting animals in need. We had to be decisive, to adapt our procedures and to act fast, and all against an uncertain financial climate caused by the pandemic. We are incredibly proud to say that we – emphatically and speedily backed by so many brilliant supporters like you – rose to the huge challenge of COVID by continuing to rescue and care for animals, find new homes for those who needed them and release wild animals back to their natural habitats. As the virus took hold, our officers rallied round helping where they could, often feeding pets whose owners were in hospital.

As we approach our 200th anniversary in 2024, we'll carry on adapting to help animals in a fast-changing world. We'll also continue to lead the debate on animal welfare and on human interactions with animals in general – the

pandemic has taught us that we urgently need to get this relationship right. We know that we can't do any of this alone – we will keep on building an unstoppable animal welfare movement by harnessing the compassion of our supporters and by working with other organisations and lawmakers to build a better world for animals.

In the following pages, you can read about just some of the incredible work our staff and volunteers did in 2020, despite the restrictions. Together, we were always there for animals. Through it all, we rescued, rehabilitated, treated and rehomed or released thousands of animals in desperate need. We promoted empathy and compassion in future generations through our education programmes, including providing animal welfare-related home-schooling resources when schools were closed. And we protected animals from harm in this new world with COVID-related welfare advice.

We simply couldn't do what we do without you. Thanks to you, we are still here for animals. Always.

Chris Sherwood RSPCA Chief Executive

2020: Coping with crisis together

When COVID-19 hit, organisations and individuals the world over had to make major and immediate changes. At the RSPCA, this was especially difficult because a combination of higher expenditure and lower legacy receipts had led to successive years of financial deficits. We knew straight away that we would have to think, act and work very differently – and we had to make those changes incredibly quickly and under great pressure. The priority was to make sure that animals would not suffer, while also keeping people safe.

Crucially, we immediately gained key-worker recognition for our inspectors, field officers and centre staff, so they could continue to rescue and care for animals during lockdowns. We took full advantage of digital solutions, for example using video for home checks when rehoming some animals. Working closely with partners in other organisations, we were able to make sure the best care was always there for any animal in need. And most of our office-based staff moved to home-working.

A big concern was how our funding might be hit by the pandemic. To get ahead of the curve, a huge team effort went into launching an urgent emergency appeal to give us some financial certainty. Our fantastic donors really stepped up, raising an incredible £1.8 million in 2020, which was absolutely vital to help us keep going.

Meanwhile, our amazing branches really showed their commitment to working together to support local, hands-on animal welfare. We sent out an appeal to all of them to dig deep and do what they could to help support RSPCA branches that were struggling financially. They responded by raising a total of £1.7 million – more than three times the target we had set – meaning that animals could continue to be protected, wherever they were. This was a fantastic example of cross-branch teamwork and collaboration for animals.

Throughout this extraordinary year, people like you were always there, whether giving much-needed funds, offering their time as volunteers or supporting us by fundraising, campaigning, fostering or adopting animals, even though the circumstances and ways we worked had changed so dramatically. In these pages, you'll see that this unflinching support has meant the world to us at a time when we needed it the most – and to the animals we're here to protect. Thank you.



Only a call away

Protecting animals from harm and rescuing those in dire need is right at the heart of what we do. Our teams of dedicated animal rescuers work across England and Wales, saving animals from cruelty, neglect, abandonment or accident. No two rescues are ever the same; sometimes we have to go into dangerous situations to bring animals at risk to safety, often working with other emergency services and animal welfare organisations. And sometimes we're faced with a head-scratching conundrum. But whatever happens, we'll always be there when an animal is in trouble. Thankfully, we have the help of a caring public to let us know when and where we're needed – a phone call is often a vital first step in our rescue work. Here are just a few of our rescues from 2020.



Just in time for little Penny

When a kind-hearted member of the public took a heavily pregnant terrier to our Millbrook Animal Centre, the team there feared the worst.

“We were very worried when we saw her condition,” says Deputy Manager Liz Wood. “She looked gravely ill and hardly responded to us. We rushed her to the vets, who discovered she was covered in fleas and maggots, dehydrated and with critically low blood-sugar levels.”

The little dog, since named Penny, had been left in a field and was barely clinging on to life. The vet immediately put her on a drip to get vital fluids into her little body. When she gave birth, a day later, five of her puppies were stillborn and the sixth died shortly afterwards.

It was clear she'd need lots of love and care after her trauma, which the Millbrook team was only too happy to provide. She was very shut down, weak and scared, hiding at the back of her kennel and shaking. Deputy Manager Liz Wood fed her small amounts of chicken to build up her strength, and patiently taught her how to play with toys to bring her out of her shell. “I remember how happy it made me when she ran after a ball for the first time with her tail wagging,” she says. “I knew then she was well on the road to recovery.” Better still, a TV appeal generated potential new owners within hours and – after a socially distanced home check – Penny had her loving forever home.

“Penny settled in straight away,” says new owner Dena. “It’s hard to believe she had a difficult start in life, because she seems so happy all the time now. We’ve loved watching her grow in confidence and trust. We’re so grateful to the RSPCA for saving her and bringing her into our family.”

OUR CENTRES
AND BRANCHES GAVE
29,358
ANIMALS A SECOND
CHANCE OF A NEW
HOME IN 2020



IN 2020
13,124
WILD ANIMALS WERE
ADMITTED TO OUR
WILDLIFE CENTRES





No time to lose after oil spill

When we were alerted to an oil spill in a Lancashire canal, we had to act quickly.

Oil contamination in water immediately spells danger for waterfowl. Once oil gets on their feathers, they will try to clean their plumage by preening, which means they don't feed and can be poisoned by the oil. They can also die from hypothermia or drowning because the oil reduces the natural waterproofing in their feathers and weighs them down. We had to get them out of there – and fast.

The appalling conditions of relentless driving rain and contaminated water made it a challenging mission. Nevertheless, our specially-trained water rescue officers managed – against desperate odds – to rescue five thoroughly blackened swans.

But that wasn't the end of the story. Staff and volunteers at our Stapeley Grange Wildlife Centre began the big clean-up operation, administering several deep cleans to remove all the oil from the birds.

"Cleaning just one bird would use half a bottle of washing-up liquid, and some birds needed multiple washes," explains Stapeley Grange Manager Lee Stewart. "Afterwards, we transferred them to outside pools with other swans, geese and ducks to wait until all the oil had dissipated."

A few weeks later, once the canal was clean again, Animal Rescue Officer Steve Wickham and a volunteer helped release the swans back at their home. "It was just wonderful to see them swim free," Steve says.



Fabulous outcome for foxy friend

In September, two householders were horrified when they discovered an exhausted fox fighting for his life in their swimming pool – they feared he had been trapped there for hours. They managed to get him out, but could see he was in a bad way, and they immediately called us.

Animal Rescue Officer Emma Byrne raced to the scene and immediately carried out on-the-spot lifesaving measures to get water out of him and check his condition. The fox was showing signs of shock and Emma knew he was still vulnerable, so she rushed him to our Mallydams Wood Wildlife Centre, where he was put on a drip and kept in a secure isolation unit to rest under an infrared heat lamp. Thankfully, by the next day, he was bright and alert and gobbled up his breakfast. Just three days later, Emma was there to see him released back into the couple's garden, none the worse for his watery experience.

Better still, there won't be a repeat performance from the fox or any other wild visitors in future. Following our advice on making their garden more wildlife-friendly, the owners had covered the pool over and now plan to install wildlife ramps in it.

IN 2020 RSPCA
BRANCHES REHOMED
OR RELEASED
24,637
ANIMALS





Building new lives

Many of the animals we take in need both physical treatment and trauma support before we can rehome them or release them back into the wild. Our expert veterinary staff, carers, behaviourists and volunteers are there to make sure every animal has the best possible second chance at life. This often takes a great deal of skill, time, energy, love and endless patience.

IN 2020 RSPCA
BRANCHES AND ANIMAL
CENTRES CARED FOR MORE
THAN **30,000**
CATS, DOGS, RABBITS
AND EQUINES



Ponies walk on into the sunset

When concerned members of the public alerted us to a herd of more than 30 Shetland ponies in trouble, we found many were in a terrible state. They had been left to fend for themselves in a field by owners who just couldn't cope. Many had painfully overgrown hooves that had almost curled over and teeth so long they had caused mouth sores.

Their overwhelmed owners agreed to sign over those in need of medical treatment to us, and we transported 16 ponies to our Millbrook Animal Centre. Tragically, three ponies were in such a bad way that they could not be saved.

Nervous, elderly and unused to handling, the remaining 13 ponies needed very careful and intensive treatment to get them on the road to recovery. A vet noted that one pony's rotten, overgrown and sharp

teeth were the worst he'd ever seen. Another had no teeth left at all.

Most of the ponies needed a great deal of dental treatment and farrier work to get them back into the best possible physical condition.

Our equine team patiently set about slowly gaining the ponies' trust and getting them used to everyday activities, such as grooming, wearing a head collar and being led from field to stable. Gentle walks on leads eventually did the trick and the ponies gradually grew in confidence and trust. Finally, they were ready for rehoming and, after featuring in our website's 'Find a pet' search, all 13 were quickly settled into happy new homes, where they will be loved and cared for through their sunset years.



TOGETHER WE REHOME

Making perfect matches

Many of the animals we rescue are pets that need rehoming. Our centres and branches always go the extra mile to find the perfect match for each and every one of them, whatever they've been through.



Taking time for Oscar

Finding the perfect forever home for a traumatised animal is not always easy. With a pandemic added to the mix, it can be even more tricky.

German shepherd Oscar had been nursed back to health at our Millbrook Animal Centre after arriving very malnourished back in 2019. Just as he became ready for rehoming in early 2020, the first lockdown began and all our centres were closed to the public.

Plunged into a constantly changing world of new rules, processes and restrictions, we were determined to find safe ways to ensure the animals in our care would get the new homes they deserved. For cats and small animals, video calls and home checks were good alternatives to home visits. But this approach wasn't safe or practical for dogs. We took the issue directly to Defra and developed new, COVID-safe guidelines for rehoming dogs.

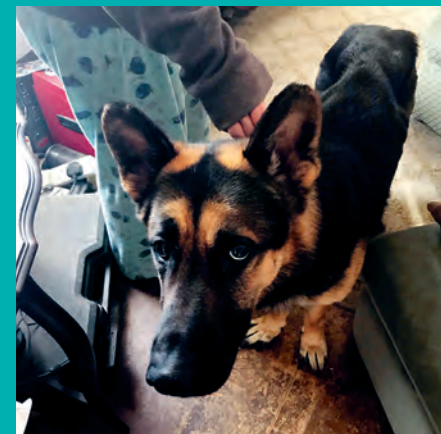
After his troubled past, Oscar's trust issues made him anxious and terrified of people. Animal Care Assistant Hanna had spent a lot of time with Oscar and nurtured him through these problems and knew he needed special owners with the skills, experience and commitment to reassure and bring out the best in him.

Luckily, the team at Millbrook knew the perfect couple, who had adopted German shepherd dogs from the centre in the past. Once all the COVID safety measures were in place, the work began to gradually introduce the couple to Oscar and, over several visits, to help him transfer his attachment from Hanna to them. The visits were all scheduled appointments with social distancing and masks all being new things for Oscar and everyone else to work with. Oscar was nervous at first and it was clear he would need time to adjust and feel safe with new people – after all, he'd been in lockdown too. But with each visit, his body language changed and it soon became clear he had found his forever home.

Once he'd settled in, we visited his new home to find him happily curled up in an armchair. He loves long country walks with his new family, playing with toys and cracking challenging feeding puzzles. The ongoing restrictions due to the pandemic helped him get used to other people and situations gradually and he's embracing new experiences, such as playing in the sea. It took time, effort and the love and patience of centre staff and his new owners to rehome Oscar, but it was all worthwhile.



OSCAR WAS MALNOURISHED WHEN HE ARRIVED AT RSPCA MILLBROOK ANIMAL CENTRE IN 2019.



A young boy with light brown hair, wearing a black long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, is crouching on a lush green lawn. He is looking down at a golden retriever puppy that is standing on its hind legs, reaching its front paws towards the boy's hands. The puppy is wearing a bright red raincoat with a small white logo on the side. The background is a soft-focus green field with trees in the distance.

Inspiring a kinder generation

It's right there in our name – we are here to prevent cruelty. Our Generation Kind initiative engages teachers and other practitioners working with young people to inspire empathy and compassion in them. With COVID-19 disrupting classroom and other face-to-face interactions, we quickly adapted to offer online services and were still able to engage with more than 80,000 adults and young people over the year, which was slightly more than usual.

From the second lockdown onwards, we worked in bubbles in schools and at our own education hubs. Here are just some of our successes in 2020.



▶ We saw that we could help home-working or furloughed parents and home-schooled kids by providing extra online activities. Our home-schooling activity ideas generated a **300 percent rise** in hits on our education website, so we reached more families than ever during lockdown.

▶ Our new Underwater Worlds online learning programme for pupils aged seven to 11 featured an animated character called Kenny the crab (right), who was a bit of an internet sensation during the summer. More than **2,000 activity packs**, which highlighted the dangers of litter for wildlife, were downloaded in a month and **1,500 schools** took part in 2020, reaching **more than 100,000 pupils**.



▶ We delivered more than **200 online sessions**, assemblies and workshops to schools, social workers and mental health groups, which meant we were still able to get our welfare messages out to young people and those who work with them.



▶ Our flagship Paws for Change course – bringing vulnerable young people together with dogs from rescue backgrounds – went online to rave reviews. In 2020, **18 young people** took part and gained certificates along with an understanding of dog behaviour and basic training.

▶ We held our annual Great Debate (left) for pupils aged 11 to 14, with video submissions from **more than 300 students** for our popular debating competition.

▶ Our four animal centre-based education hubs connected with **more than 8,000 young people** through our Wild Things programmes, which focus on people's mental health needs in areas where we see high levels of animal cruelty.

▶ We delivered Initial Teacher Training (ITT) workshops to **more than 300 student teachers**, showing them how to integrate animal welfare into the National Curriculum using our online lesson plans.

▶ We supported **73 social workers and foster carers** looking after **more than 150 young people** experiencing problematic relationships with animals.

Speaking out for animals

We've been fighting for animals' needs for nearly two centuries and – working with our supporters, politicians and other organisations – we're still achieving landmark legislative changes that will guarantee their protection. This was certainly an unprecedented year, full of challenges and opportunities, dominated as it was by Brexit and the pandemic. We made it count with some big animal welfare wins.

Dramatic change for England's farm animals

In one of the biggest changes to British agriculture in 70 years, our work, in collaboration with other animal welfare charities, secured the promise of much better lives for animals on farms in England from 2020 in the new Agriculture Act. Now, instead of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) payments being made to farmers with the largest farms, subsidies will go to those meeting higher environmental and animal welfare standards. For example, payments might be awarded for capital costs to improve buildings, farming chickens to higher welfare standards or for ensuring no tail docking in pigs. Rather than supporting intensive farming methods, the new Act will incentivise farmers to adopt higher welfare standards.

Making Brexit work for welfare

In the build-up to the UK's Brexit deal, announced at the end of 2020, we worked tirelessly with 19 other organisations and with politicians to keep tariffs on farm products at broadly the same levels as when we were in the EU, safeguarding our higher-welfare producers from cheaper, lower-welfare imports. We were also quick to take the opportunity to diverge from EU rules on sensitive issues, such as live exports

– something we have wanted to see banned for decades.

Welfare-friendly trade secured for the future

When the UK became an independent trade organisation, free to negotiate trade agreements outside the EU, there was a real potential threat to animal welfare standards on our farms. After two RSPCA reports, many briefings and intensive lobbying, Westminster made a U-turn. It set up a specific commission, which included the RSPCA, to ensure animal welfare standards will not be undermined in future trade agreements. All its 22 recommendations are in line with our goals.

Key worker recognition

At a time of extreme pressure and uncertainty at the beginning of the pandemic, we were determined to be able to continue to rescue and care for animals. We urgently lobbied the English and Welsh governments and established key-worker status for our inspectors, field officers and centre staff from the start.

Legislative wins

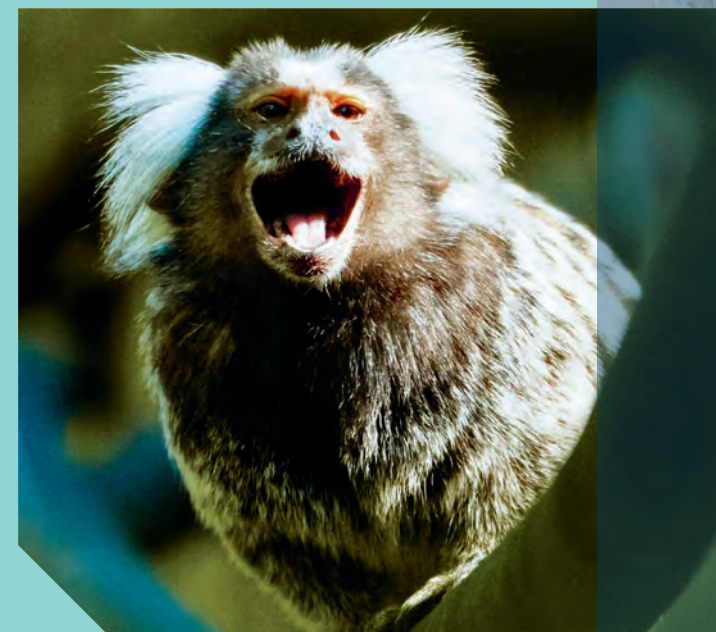
After years of campaigning, we achieved a ban on the

use of wild animals in circuses in England and Wales in 2020. This came into force in England at the start of the year and in Wales by December 2020.

We also lobbied the UK and Welsh Governments with many of our long-term concerns and proposals, including:

- ▶ mandatory cat microchipping
- ▶ a ban on the private keeping of primates
- ▶ an end to live exports of farm animals
- ▶ improving animal transport conditions
- ▶ a ban on the import of dogs with cropped ears.

The Governments have responded positively and we expect firm commitments in all of these areas in 2021.



Your local RSPCA

So much of our vital animal welfare work is carried out by our network of branches across England and Wales. These branches raise their own funds locally to protect and look after animals in need. All of the amazing work they do is carried out by an army of dedicated volunteers.

- ▶ Our branch appeal at the start of the pandemic raised a **total of £1.7 million**, which meant we could keep 17 at-risk branches operational. This was a great example of our branches pulling together to support each other and guarantee that animals in need would continue to be helped, wherever they were.
- ▶ Despite the pressures COVID-19 brought in 2020, our branches developed safe ways of working and during the year still managed to take in **31,076 animals in need**, rehoming or **releasing 24,637 of them**. They also **neutered 43,380** and **microchipped 27,720 animals**, as well as **helping treat 40,412** – what an incredible achievement in such difficult circumstances.

- ▶ They were also there to help people who were struggling to pay their vet bills or benefit from pet food banks.
- ▶ When animal owners were taken ill with COVID, our local teams were there to take in and look after their animals.
- ▶ As well as traditional volunteering roles, we offered lots of microvolunteering opportunities to our supporters in 2020, giving them the means to support our campaigns or promote our work and messages on social media.

This drove a **91 percent increase** and much more diversity in our volunteer base, which brings everyone in our communities together and gives us the power to make a lot more noise for animal welfare.





Following the science

We were the first animal welfare organisation to be established in the world. After nearly two centuries of protecting animals, our experience and expertise make us the go-to people for animal welfare. That hard-earned reputation – and everything we do – is informed by sound scientific and robust, practical evidence. Our in-house scientists are experts in animal welfare, constantly

scanning and analysing the latest findings and insights about the needs of companion animals, farmed animals, animals used in research and wildlife.

By engaging with and influencing government policymakers, industry, media and communities locally and globally, they drive real, practical changes that continually advance the welfare of all animals.

Working together for pets

During 2020, our work for pets, working and sporting animals included:

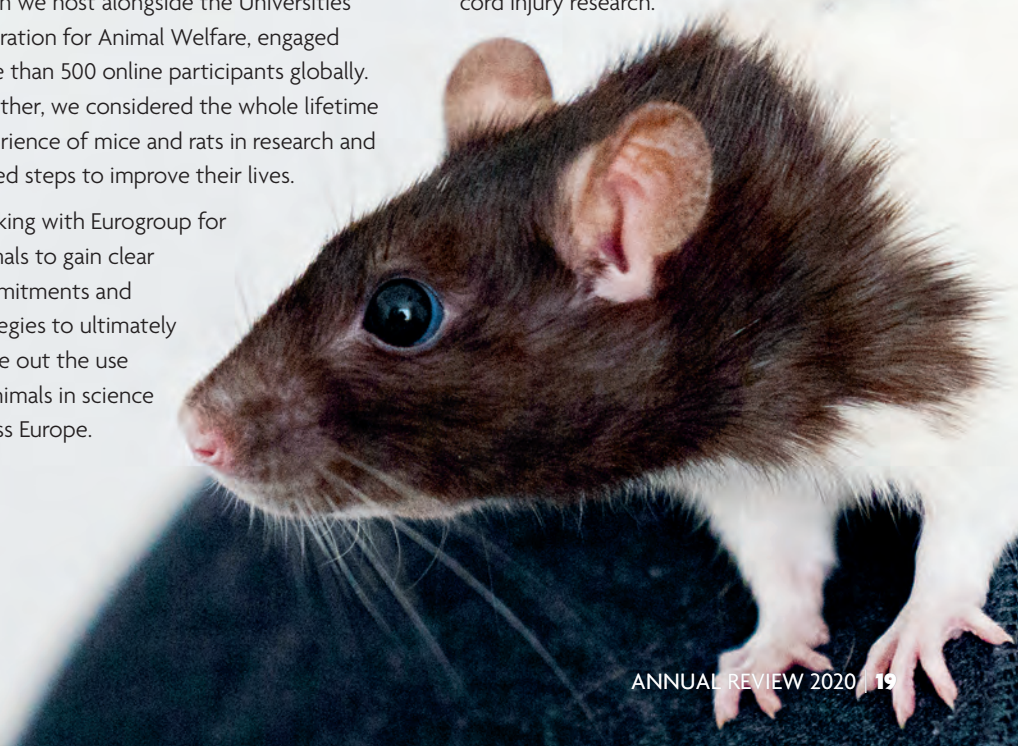
- ▶ Making sure the public, animal-related businesses and RSPCA staff and volunteers could access the most up-to-date information about getting and looking after pets in the midst of the sudden pet-buying epidemic caused by COVID-19. Interest in pet ownership rose steeply in lockdowns and irresponsible and illegal breeders were quick to profit from the situation. This was a new and large-scale threat to animal welfare and we needed to use all our expertise to tackle it. Working closely with other animal welfare organisations, we got urgent information out there to help people get puppies or kittens safely, care for and entertain their pets during lockdown, socialise them while socially distancing, exercise their dogs and manage any health and behavioural issues.
- ▶ Using the latest science to enable us to understand how an animal is feeling and what they need, to provide new welfare assessment methods for our animal rescue officers to use. Our rescuers will be able to quickly determine exactly what each individual animal needs to give them the best chance of a good life.
- ▶ Collaborating on welfare-related point-of-sale material for buyers of pets. We always recommend adoption to anyone wanting a new pet, but people do still buy them from breeders, pet shops and online, often without receiving proper guidance about their needs. We worked with the Pet Advertising Advisory Group to provide specific information for its web pages on various small animal species, about their welfare needs and the checks owners should make before buying.
- ▶ Keeping the equine crisis in the public eye by holding our first-ever online Lead the Debate initiative, hosted by TV newsreader Victoria Derbyshire with a panel of thought leaders, including *Dragons' Den*'s Deborah Meaden, Redwings Horse Sanctuary's Head of Welfare and Behaviour Nicolas De Brauwere and RSPCA Chief Executive Chris Sherwood. The debate informed equine welfare organisations in their drive to resolve the ongoing crisis of overbreeding, overpopulation, abandonment and neglect.



Working together for animals used in science

Our work for animals used in research and testing in 2020 included:

- ▶ Clearly communicating our position on animals used in research to develop drugs and vaccines for COVID-19. We highlighted the increased international collaboration and emphasis on epidemiology, human case studies and non-animal alternatives, while avoiding some animal use. We want the lessons learned to be applied to future research practices.
- ▶ Reducing animal suffering and improving welfare. Every year, around the world, more than 100 million animals are used in experiments. Our key priority is securing a global commitment to phasing out animal use. As long as this continues, we also work hard to reduce animal suffering and improve welfare. Our annual rodent welfare meeting, which we host alongside the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, engaged more than 500 online participants globally. Together, we considered the whole lifetime experience of mice and rats in research and agreed steps to improve their lives.
- ▶ Working with Eurogroup for Animals to gain clear commitments and strategies to ultimately phase out the use of animals in science across Europe.
- ▶ Promoting robust ethical review of animal experiments. Every UK establishment that uses animals in science has a local Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB), which challenges whether and how animals should be used. We held a major meeting (online) to help AWERBs continue to work effectively under lockdown conditions. We also ran three online training workshops to help lay AWERB members to understand and carry out their roles effectively and produced new guidance on developing the 'Culture of care'.
- ▶ As part of our groundbreaking 'Focus on severe suffering' initiative, publishing new recommendations to reduce and avoid animal suffering in spinal cord injury research.



Working together for wildlife

Our work for wild animals during 2020 included:

- ▶ Providing COVID-related advice and information for the public, our staff and volunteers and other wildlife rehabilitation establishments, including resources about wildlife and coronavirus and walking dogs in the countryside.
- ▶ Encouraging around 12,000 of our supporters to back us by complaining to Ofcom about the use of animals in ITV's *I'm a celebrity, get me out of here*, thereby raising public awareness of the welfare issues in the show.
- ▶ Providing evidence for Defra on the welfare issues around keeping primates as pets, leading to the announcement of a full consultation at the end of the year.
- ▶ Training recruits to our newly created Animal Rescue Officer role and trainee inspectors on exotic pet welfare and legislation.
- ▶ Raising public and media awareness of the danger of glue traps by reporting on the fate of a robin caught by one. We petitioned suppliers to stop their sale. A bill to ban these traps has been backed by Westminster.
- ▶ Publishing a report – *Ruminations on bovine TB* – on our website. It summarised the results of our 2019 consultation on bovine TB.



Working together for farm animals

Our work for farm animals in 2020 included:

- ▶ Bringing the suffering of meat chickens to media and public attention through our seminal report *Eat. Sit. Suffer. Repeat*. The report showcased the results of RSPCA-funded research, which revealed the suffering meat chickens endure to fulfil the global demand for chicken meat.
- ▶ Encouraging food businesses across Europe to sign the *Better Chicken Commitment* and improve chicken welfare standards throughout their supply chains by 2026. In 2020, big players Nando's and Greggs signed up. Overall, the *Better Chicken Commitment* currently improves welfare standards for more than 300 million birds a year.
- ▶ Informing and shaping Defra's welfare-changing decision to introduce post-Brexit subsidy payments that incentivise livestock farmers to adopt higher welfare standards. This could significantly improve millions of farm animals' lives every year.
- ▶ Updating our welfare standards for sheep, salmon and pigs. The standards cover everything experienced by farmed animals, from on-farm practice to transport and slaughter. We also worked on our existing standards for other species.
- ▶ Working with Westminster to establish how to tackle issues such as cages for laying hens, farrowing crates for pigs and fast-growing meat chicken breeds.
- ▶ Giving food retailers, industry groups and restaurant chains all the technical information, advice and recommendations they need to make sure their policies and practices are more animal welfare friendly.





RSPCA Assured

RSPCA Assured is our flagship farm assurance scheme and ethical food label. It offers better welfare for animals reared within the scheme and empowers consumers who choose the RSPCA Assured label to buy into higher welfare when shopping for products from beef cattle, meat chickens, dairy cattle, egg-laying hens, pigs, sheep, salmon, trout and turkeys.



- ▶ When COVID-19 hit, we were determined to make sure our farm audits and certifications would still go ahead. We brought in new processes and pioneered a new desktop auditing system to prioritise animal welfare throughout the pandemic.
- ▶ Nevertheless, as soon as we could do so safely, we got back out onto farms and still conducted most of our 2020 assessments in person.
- ▶ The amazing farmers in the RSPCA Assured scheme worked hard to keep going, despite supply-chain disruptions and other pandemic-related challenges. Such issues could have moved animal welfare lower down the priority list for retailers, but we're delighted to report that new RSPCA Assured ranges were launched in 2020. These included Tesco's 'Room to Roam' chicken and its commitment to higher welfare for its own-brand free range eggs, meaning better lives for tens of millions of birds.

Other news from a year that brought new challenges – 2020

Reassurance and support through COVID-19

The unprecedented disruption to normal life that came with COVID left concerned owners with many questions about how to care for pets and other animals, particularly if owners were self-isolating or became ill.

We were there to reassure them and to provide the latest advice through the media and our website, as well as giving very practical help. For example, RSPCA Inspector Suzi Smith had the fantastic idea of providing downloadable forms and posters for pet owners to display in their homes to make sure their animals would be cared for in an emergency. Grateful owners went on to download our pet care plans.

We also offered specific advice for COVID-related situations, such as for people walking dogs whose owners were isolating, and for owners wanting to prepare their pets for their eventual return to work.

Although our rescue work continued, in March/April we had to suspend our rehoming work for a time. With Defra, we developed new guidelines that allowed us to resume our rehoming activities safely by the end of April.

On top of the amazing day-to-day work our big-hearted rescuers continued to do through various lockdowns and restrictions, many of them went the extra mile in their spare time to make sure the new normal was the best it could be for animals. Among other things, our staff fostered and hand-reared the animals most in need, delivered pet food to isolating owners, cleaned up green spaces to protect wildlife and transported emergency pet medicine supplies.

Wildlife comeback caught on camera

COVID-19 turned out to be no barrier to the 2020 RSPCA Young Photographer Awards in its 30th year, with a record number of entries and a winning shot that beautifully encapsulates the story of our wildlife during this most unusual of years.

We thought hard about the potential limits on entrants, who would have little or no chance of travel for photo opportunities due to lockdown restrictions. Our new category, Small World, recognised those restrictions, but encouraged young photographers to seek out equally great photo opportunities closer to home.

We wondered whether COVID might limit the number of entries, but, in the event, it seemed the situation actually encouraged young people to get creative with their cameras, and 11,000 entries flooded in.

The overall winner, Jake Kneale, used a camera trap on farmland near his home to capture a wonderful image of an inquisitive roe deer fully at home in its surroundings – a perfect example of how wildlife began to reclaim our open spaces while most of us stayed at home.

At a virtual award ceremony, judge and RSPCA Vice President Chris Packham said the shot was “A triumph of expertise. Technically, camera trapping can be even more challenging than taking normal photographs. This image is beautifully lit and composed and displays the naturalist and field skills that the best wildlife photographers have.”



Jake Kneale (deer), Eleanor Ramsey (horses),
Ellis Owen (kingfisher), Thomas Scott (pigeons)

Go virtual, go visual...go viral

We weren't going to let a pandemic stop us connecting with the animal-loving public and our brilliant supporters, so we went online in 2020 to hold our fun and fabulous fundraising events virtually:

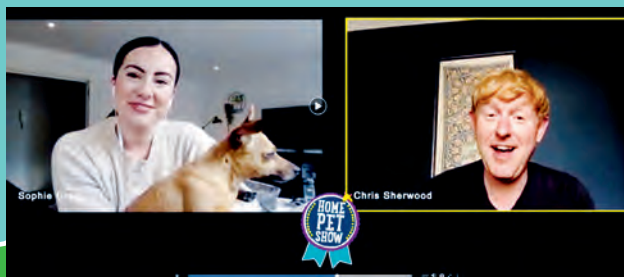
One Fun Day in June was a great way to showcase what we're all about at the RSPCA and to invite our enthusiastic supporters behind the scenes. We got people and their animals involved in fun quizzes, live Facebook events with celebrities, virtual visits to RSPCA animal centres to 'meet' some of the residents, tips and tricks for dogs and the



grand final of our virtual Home Pet Show, won by some of the most loving, helpful, clever pets around.

Howl-o-Ween in October celebrated the wonderful uniqueness of all animals, however spooky they may be perceived to be, from bats to black cats and minibeasts to reptiles. A team of RSPCA celebrity and influencer friends staged an afternoon of interactive, virtual family fun showcasing the diversity of animals and the importance of all animals' welfare.

Also in October, **Adoptober** is our annual event to help more animals find their forever homes. We focused on our longest-staying animals to encourage people to adopt instead of buying new pets.



Special award for a special inspector

We are very proud to report that our wildlife coordinator, Inspector Geoff Edmond, has been given a lifetime achievement award by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Geoff has shown true dedication by working in partnership with teams within the RSPCA and in outside organisations, such as the police, to protect wildlife and combat wildlife crime. He is one of our go-to people for

advice on a range of wildlife-related issues, from rescue and rehabilitation to legislation and crime investigation.

Geoff firmly believes it is that inter-team collaboration that makes a real difference – he also says he has the best job in the world. And we think he fully deserves this recognition of his unique contribution to animal welfare.



Storm-proofing for the future

As if the pandemic weren't enough, there was also widespread flooding in early 2020, with animals and people endangered by storms Ciara, Dennis and Jorge. As part of Defra's Flood Rescue National Asset Register, we responded to 246 calls to rescue horses, feed stranded sheep and move terrified pets and their owners to safety.



We have around 65 officers trained and equipped for this kind of specialised work, plus a fleet of 35 inflatable boats. Maintaining this team is vital at a time of uncertainty around climate change, so we launched an emergency flooding appeal, which raised more than £20,000. This means that, thanks once again to our caring supporters, we can keep going and carry on rescuing animals in peril, whatever challenges are thrown at us.



Photo: Shi Ming

Working together internationally

People's interactions with animals can have an impact on their welfare – and on ours – wherever they are. We work with many organisations and groups globally to share our knowledge and experience and to change attitudes and behaviours towards all animals, everywhere.

Inevitably, the COVID-19 pandemic gave rise to a host of global animal welfare efforts, and we were at the heart of these.

- ▶ In an immediate response to the pandemic, we provided technical advice to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on the welfare challenges posed by the pandemic to companion animals, particularly free-roaming and stray animals.
- ▶ We joined an international programme to reduce the risk of pandemics arising in the future. The COVID-19 Thematic Platform on Animal Welfare brings together representatives from the Emergency Veterinary Network (EmVetNet) and a variety of international centres, institutions and authorities.
- ▶ We worked with fellow members of the International Coalition for Animal Welfare (ICFAW) and others to bring about a substantial reduction in the global wildlife trade, and to reduce the risk of zoonotic diseases, which are diseases that can be passed from animals to humans, through improved handling and transport practices.
- ▶ We provided input for the English version of China's guidelines for ethical review of lab animal care and use. These will ensure better ethical oversight in China's international cooperation in biosciences.
- ▶ Prior to a planned phasing out of our activities in Africa, with our recent appeal for Malawi we were able to fund the purchase of a site for a desperately needed new veterinary hospital and animal welfare centre in Lilongwe.

200 years of never

Two major milestone moments are coming up for the RSPCA, and we are already planning a host of exciting events and campaigns around them. We hope that you – along with many thousands of other supporters – will get involved and experience what promises to be a big celebratory buzz around our achievements so far and our plans for the future.

giving up!

In 2022, we'll mark the 200th anniversary of the first animal welfare legislation passed in British law, which was championed by one of our founders, Richard Martin. The Cruel Treatment of Cattle Act 1822 was nicknamed 'Martin's Act'. Martin would go on, with like-minded humanitarian thinkers, to form the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals – later the RSPCA – in 1824. Since then, the RSPCA has been in the vanguard of many more important legislative gains for animals, and we're still campaigning for them, nearly two centuries on.

For our bicentennial year in 2024, we're planning a variety of activities to reflect on our history and our impact on animal welfare as well focusing on our bold ambitions for the future.

Over the last 200 years, the RSPCA has become part of the fabric of society, trusted and recognised as THE people for animal welfare. We can all be proud of that and of how we have worked together to build a better world for animals. But we're still needed and there is much more for us to do for animals. We can't do it alone though – we will need all our supporters and volunteers, as well as our partners in other rescue services and charities, to help us deliver on our vital commitments to animal welfare.

Our new 10-year strategy, *Together for animal welfare*, has a very clear mission: we want to ensure animals have a good life by rescuing and caring for those in need, by advocating on behalf of all animals and by inspiring everyone to treat them with compassion and respect.

“
We can't do it alone though – we will need all our supporters and volunteers, as well as our partners in other rescue services and charities, to help us deliver on our vital commitments to animal welfare.
”

Nearly 200 years later we're still committed to saving animals from harm.

2020: YOUR SUPPORT MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

In 2020, 523,880 generous people supported our fundraising campaigns by making cash donations to our appeals, buying our raffle tickets, playing our lottery, sponsoring our cat pods and dog kennels, giving a monthly gift, being a member, subscribing to our magazines or donating via their mobile phone bill.

We'd like to thank our corporate partners, foundations, individuals, licensees, retailers and trusts for their generous support in 2020.

AmazonSmile

Our wonderful supporters have continued to make a success of fundraising via AmazonSmile, choosing to support the RSPCA through AmazonSmile when they shop with Amazon and raising a phenomenal £200,000 since the start of the partnership. Choosing the RSPCA as your favourite on AmazonSmile can make a big impact for animal welfare, at absolutely no extra cost to you.

Covéa – RSPCA Pet Insurance

Covea Insurance plc is delighted to be working with the RSPCA to offer supporters RSPCA Pet Insurance. Supporting the RSPCA's values, the products offer protection against unforeseen accidents or illness and for every policy sold, 15 per cent of the premium paid will go directly towards caring for less fortunate animals.

RSPCA Pet Insurance products have been designed to meet a variety of needs and budgets. They offer varying cover levels and once your pet is insured there is no upper age limit. It is supported by a high-quality, UK-based claims service and

includes well-considered benefits such as waiving remaining owed premiums if a beloved pet passes away, and cover for cremations and burials.

eBay

eBay for Charity offers an easy way for people to support charity while buying and selling items on eBay. In 2020 eBay supported charities further, running promotions where eBay quintupled donations matched via their Big Charity Sell campaign last Christmas. We are delighted with the success of the partnership to date and look forward to working together in the future.

NatWest

The Apprenticeship Levy Transfer from NatWest funded 10 RSPCA apprentices in 2020. This support continues to provide invaluable learning and development opportunities for RSPCA employees, helping us to recruit, develop and retain valued and talented people, which is a powerful resource to improve welfare outcomes for so many animals.

Nestle Purina

Nestle Purina kindly donated £50,000 to our COVID crisis appeal to demonstrate their commitment to supporting pets during the crisis. They also launched a social media campaign which raised additional donations for us. Purina has also donated pet food to our centres and branches.

Pets at Home

Our partnership with Pets at Home continues to promote awareness of responsible pet ownership and raise vital funds to support our work. We would like to thank Pets at Home colleagues and customers for supporting us throughout the year by taking part in our fundraising weekend in store, raising VIP Lifelines vouchers to provide additional products to enrich the lives of animals in our care, and helping find forever homes for cats through our rehoming pods in Chesterfield, Newport, Stockport and Friern Barnet Pets at Home stores.

Pets at Home and Support Adoption for Pets have also provided additional support through their VIP scheme and grant programmes in response to COVID.

Other supporters in 2020 include:

Admiral Group plc	Lloyds Banking Group PLC
Animal Friends Pet Insurance	Mason Cash
Assured Products Ltd	PayPal Giving Fund
Carousel Calendars	Rover
CP Designs Ltd	RSW Ltd
Good-Loop	The Art File Ltd
John Lewis & Partners	UK Greetings Ltd
Kensington Mortgages	Vetfleece
Kirstall Limited	

Generous individuals

We would like to thank the following individuals for their significant support and loyalty during 2020 which enabled us to continue rescuing and caring for animals during the pandemic:

Mrs S Baynton	Mr and Mrs Myers
Mrs M Cornioley	Mr C Perrin
Mr P Davis	Mrs P Spooner
Mrs J Ions	Mr and Mrs White



The generosity of a key group of donors allowed us to adapt and continue our educational offering and support to vulnerable children and young people in our local communities:

Mrs B Blood	Mrs F Guthrie
Ms S Diederichs	

Charitable trusts and foundations

We are very grateful to:

W G Harvey's Discretionary Settlement for its generous gift towards the construction of a new 'Home from Home' room at our Felledge Animal Centre – a purpose-built facility filled with everyday home furnishings and appliances that are completely alien objects to the dogs we've rescued from harsh and cruel environments.

The Trustees of the **Katherine Martin Charitable Trust** for its regular annual donation. In 2020 at the height of the pandemic, the Trust's donation went a long way towards ensuring that we were able to maintain our animal welfare services and keep our animal rescue teams on the front line.

Oak Foundation for its extremely generous gift towards our animal welfare work in 2020. The Foundation's donation helped us be there for the animals who desperately needed us while we were in lockdowns.

The Samuel and Freda Parkinson Charitable Trust for its continued support in 2020. The Trust's kind donation went towards vital safety equipment used by our animal rescuers working in and around Cumbria.

Petplan for its generous donation towards our dog exercise area canopy at our Great Ayton Animal Centre – it's going to make a huge difference to the dogs in our care.

We extend our utmost thanks to our Vice Presidents Brian Blessed, Peter Egan, Baroness Fookes, Satish Kumar, Dr Brian May, Bill Oddie, Chris Packham, Julian Richer and Peter Singer, and to our President Richard Ryder for their contribution in 2020.

Our Ambassadors Patrick Aryee, Eyal Booker, Rory Cowlam, Matt Johnson, Kate Lawler, Victoria Stilwell and Pete Wicks have all helped to highlight the RSPCA's vital work rescuing animals throughout the year. We also thank our friends and supporters Ricky Gervais, Deborah Meaden and Victoria Derbyshire. In a year of great change their support has been a constant.

As we grow ever closer to our 200th anniversary our renewed thanks and gratitude go to our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen.

Remembering John Bryant: Sadly in 2020 we lost a leading figure in the animal rights movement. We'd like to acknowledge the significant role John played within the RSPCA as a trustee and vice chair, and the great contribution he made to animal welfare. In 2014 he was awarded the RSPCA Gold Medal, our highest meritorious award.



Every year supporters of all ages work really hard for animals. Six-year-old Daya ran 30 kilometres over the course of a month and raised £446 for us – what a superstar.

MONEY MATTERS

OUR INCOME 2020 £116.5m

Legacy income	£54.3m	Furlough income and fees	£3.4m
Contributions and donations	£42.7m	Fixed assets disposals	£1.9m
Charitable activities	£7.3m	Investment income	£1.8m
Other income	£5.1m		



OUR EXPENDITURE 2020 £140.6m

Field animal welfare	£89.8m	Prosecutions – legal	£2.7m
Cost of raising funds	£19.2m	Education	£2.3m
Deconsolidation of branches	£12.0m	Science	£1.9m
Support to branches	£7.0m	International	£0.9m
Campaigns, communication, publications	£4.8m		

Board report on the summary financial information

This summary financial information is not the statutory financial statements, but a summary relating to the income and expenditure, prepared to give an overview of the Society's financial affairs. The full financial statements, from which the summary is derived, have been audited. The audit report was unqualified. The full financial statements, *RSPCA Trustees' report and accounts* and auditors' report may be obtained from: RSPCA, Wilberforce Way, Southwater, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 9RS or by visiting: rspca.org.uk/trusteesreport

The *Trustees' report and accounts 2020*, which was approved on 15 September 2021, has not yet been filed with the Charity Commission.

Signed on behalf of the RSPCA Board on 15 September 2021.



René Olivieri **CHAIRPERSON RSPCA BOARD OF TRUSTEES**



Barbara Gardner **TREASURER RSPCA**

Independent auditors' statement on the summary financial information

Independent auditors' statement to the trustees of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

We have examined the summarised financial information of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for the year ended 31 December 2020, set out on the opposite page.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and auditors

The trustees are responsible for preparing the *RSPCA Annual review* "summary financial information" in accordance with RSPCA Rule XVI.

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summary financial information within the *RSPCA Annual review* with the full annual financial statements and *RSPCA Trustees' report and accounts*.

We also read the other information contained in the summary financial information and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summary financial information.

Our report has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of the RSPCA Rule XVI and for no other purpose. No person is entitled to rely on this report unless such a person is a person entitled to rely upon this report by virtue of and for the purpose of the Charities Act 2011 or has been expressly authorised to do so by our prior written consent. Save as above, we do not accept responsibility for this report to any other person or for any other purpose and we hereby expressly disclaim any and all such liability.

Basis of opinion

We perform work that we consider to be sufficient so as to state whether, in our opinion, the summary financial statement is consistent with the full annual financial statements and with the other information contained within the *RSPCA Trustees' report and accounts*. We believe we have performed work sufficient to be able to reach this opinion. We do not, and are not required to, form an opinion on whether the summary financial statement gives a true and fair view. Our report on the Society's full annual financial statements describes the basis of our opinion on those financial statements and on the *RSPCA Trustees' report and accounts*.

Opinion

In our opinion the summary financial information is consistent with the full financial statements and *Trustees' report and accounts* of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for the year ended 31 December 2020.

BDO LLP

Chartered Accountants London, United Kingdom.

Date: 16 September 2021.

BDO LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales (with registered number OC305127).



For and on behalf of **BDO LLP, statutory auditor**
London, United Kingdom

To find out more download or view a copy of the
RSPCA Trustees' report and accounts 2020 at:
rspca.org.uk/trusteesreport

Together we've got this

We're always there for animals that have suffered neglect, cruelty and abuse, but with your support we can do so much more. Here are a few of the ways you can support us and help animals across England and Wales – every single action you take makes a difference to animals' lives.

► **VOLUNTEER:** Volunteers make a huge contribution to the work we do. With such a wide range of volunteering roles available across our network of branches and animal and wildlife centres, there will be an opportunity near you.

volunteer.rspca.org.uk

► **DONATE:** Your donations help us to carry out our lifesaving work rescuing animals from suffering and neglect, caring for them and finding them loving new homes.

rspca.org.uk/donate

► **CAMPAIGN:** We are campaigning to prompt political and behavioural change on a range of animal welfare related issues, but we can't do it without your help. Add your voice to our campaigns for better animal welfare.

rspca.org.uk/campaigns

► **SHOP:** Our online shop offers amazing animal charity gifts, and it's a great place to buy presents and to stock up with pet products.

shop.rspca.org.uk

► **PLAY THE RSPCA RAFFLE AND LOTTERY:**

rspca.org.uk/getinvolved/win

► **FUNDRAISE FOR ANIMALS:**

Enter one of our events, choose your own challenge or get creative and host your own event.

rspca.org.uk/fundraise

► **SPONSOR AN RSPCA DOG KENNEL OR CAT POD:**

rspca.org.uk/sponsorship

► **BECOME A MEMBER:**

Become a member: Join today and together we can work for improved animal welfare.

rspca.org.uk/membership

► **SIGN CHILDREN UP FOR AN RSPCA ANIMAL ACTION MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTION:**

Our magazine for children aged 6–12 is full of great rescue stories, behind-the-scenes peeks at our centres and staff in action, puzzles, posters, competitions and loads more for your young animal lovers.

rspca.org.uk/animalaction

► **RSPCA PET INSURANCE:** Our pet insurance offers a range of products designed to suit you and your pets, and different budgets too. And for every policy sold, 15 percent of the premium you pay goes directly to helping less fortunate animals.

rspca-petinsurance.com



Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

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supportercare@rspca.org.uk

or call our Supporter Services team on: **0300 1230 346**.

Information about how we use your personal data is set out in our privacy notice, published at:

www.rspca.org.uk/privacy

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