



It takes all of us to
create a world that's
kinder to animals

The RSPCA guide to Animal Kindness

Contents



A little kindness goes a long way

Today, animal suffering takes many forms. Some shocking, most avoidable, always heartbreaking. And this suffering can affect every animal, from wildlife to farmed livestock, marine life to pets. At the RSPCA, we're working hard every day to meet the demands of this ever-changing world. But we can't do this alone. It's going to take all of us, doing whatever we can, to end suffering and create a world that's kinder to animals.

And acts of kindness come in all shapes and sizes. So whether you're able to give an animal a new home, volunteer, shop for RSPCA Assured labelled food, or spend a moment signing a petition or making a donation, it'll make a huge difference – to vulnerable animals everywhere.

So let's start today. With a few tips and stories that can inspire us all to help create a world that's kinder to animals.



It takes bravery
and care to
always be there

“I still feel that same sense of pride and hopefulness whenever I rescue an animal, just as I did as a little boy.”

RSPCA Inspector Anthony Joynes

Some children want to grow up to be astronauts, others doctors or dancers, and some want to work with animals – like RSPCA Inspector Anthony Joynes.

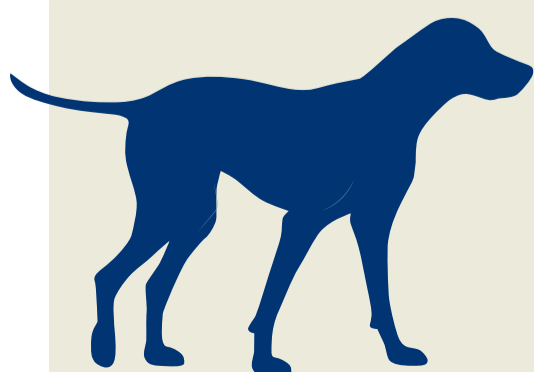
140,000 complaints of alleged animal cruelty every year. Anthony says he will never forget his first rescue. That’s because he was only 11 years old when he called our helpline about a badly neglected Dobermann on his street.

This call, this little act of kindness and bravery, was enough to get the Dobermann to safety – and save his life. Anthony remembers peering through the curtains, waiting for the RSPCA to arrive. And when they brought the dog out, he remembers feeling ‘over the moon’ that he was now safe.

“It was such an amazing feeling knowing I’d done something to help that poor neglected dog have a better life. That’s when I knew I had to join the RSPCA when I grew up. I’ve never looked back really.”

Not all of our RSPCA inspectors started rescuing animals so young, but they all share a common goal: to be kind and caring to all animals and help protect them from harm.

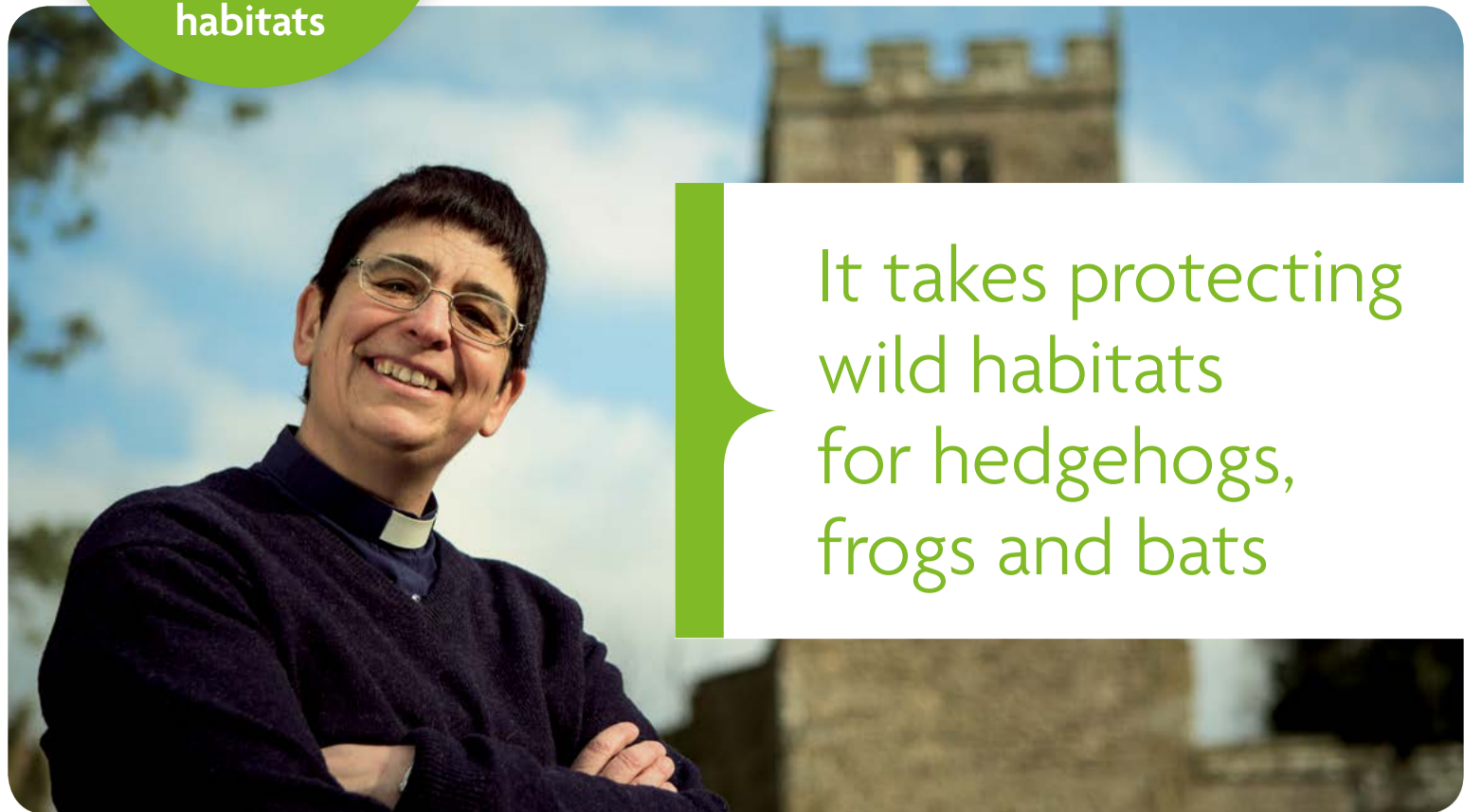
And you can help them too, by calling our helpline if you ever see an animal in danger.



Little acts of kindness

If you see an animal in danger, neglected or being mistreated, please call our Cruelty and Emergency Helpline on: **0300 1234 999**.





It takes protecting wild habitats for hedgehogs, frogs and bats

When Caroline Hewlett took over as vicar of St Andrew's Church in Swaledale, she didn't just get to meet a new congregation, she was also introduced to some unexpected guests – several species of British bats.

In the church, there were bat droppings everywhere and bat urine was marking the woodwork. But, when Caroline approached a local expert, she found out that all bats and bat roosts in the UK are protected by law because of their declining numbers.

Caroline quickly made it her mission to be as kind as possible to her new nocturnal friends. She went on a course, and since then has been organising bat walks and talks as well as important 'bat counts' to see who's coming and going. Caroline also keeps an eye out for baby bats (pups) who sometimes fall from the roost. Unlike birds, bats can't easily take off from the floor so occasionally they need help from an expert to get them back to higher ground.

All around the church you'll find information on these fascinating creatures. But, as Caroline told us, the bats were just the start. St Andrew's now has its own little ecosystem. With help from local experts and volunteers, the churchyard is filled with bird boxes, beehives and thriving natural vegetation, which all attract amazing wildlife.



“The bat roost we have here is significant because it's a maternity roost – it's where females come to give birth and where the babies learn to fly from.”

Did you know?

- The RSPCA rehabilitates around 250 bats every year.
- We have cared for more than 15 bat species, including some less common ones, such as barbastelle, grey long-eared, lesser horseshoe and serotine.



How we can all be kinder to animal habitats

Here are a few quick tips on how to welcome wonderful wildlife into your garden, and help keep animals safe.

Happy hedgehogs

Hedgehogs need to travel over a mile a day to find food and shelter. Help them on their way by making a little gap in your garden fence, removing a brick from your wall or digging a small tunnel underneath any boundaries. Piles of logs and leaves make great homes for hedgehogs, so always take care when gardening and check bonfires for prickly residents thoroughly before lighting. You could also put covers on drains to make sure hedgehogs don't get trapped inside.

Kind care for baby birds

It's natural to be concerned about a baby bird that's seen outside of their nest. If the bird is not fully feathered (nestling), either take them to your local vet or contact the RSPCA. Do not touch a fully feathered bird (fledgling) unless they look sick or injured. Their parents are probably nearby and will continue feeding them once you've left.

Did you know?

- Between April and July, as many as 20,000 fledgling birds are picked up and passed on to the RSPCA by people who think the bird has been abandoned or orphaned.



Wildlife haven

Leaving an area of your garden overgrown will help to attract wildlife, including insects that wild animals like to eat. Log, stone and compost piles provide refuges for small mammals and amphibians. Check for animals such as frogs and slow worms before mowing or strimming.

Friendly feeders

When putting out feeders or bowls of water for animals and birds, make sure they're placed far away from bushes where predators might lurk. It's also important to clean all water containers daily, and feeders weekly (and dry them before refilling) to prevent diseases spreading.

Ponds for all

Ponds are great natural sources of drinking water for animals. They attract everything from badgers to frogs. But ponds don't have lifeguards, so add a sloping side or steps in case a thirsty animal falls in.



Little acts of kindness

Encourage frogs and toads to your pond by having a shallow area that's perfect for spawning. But don't take spawn from a different pond as this can spread disease.





It takes considerate friends for the injuries to end.

“We’ve pulled out nearly 100 tonnes of rubbish from this small woodland.”

Lucy Quinnell

Alongside the busy M25, next to a petrol station and superstore, sits Teazole Wood. Home to many different animals and insects, this wonderful woodland was saved from development by a whole community of kind, caring people.

More than five years ago, Lucy Quinnell led a campaign to save Teazole Wood and tidy it up after years of neglect. For nearly a century, this natural habitat had been used as a dumping ground for industrial and household rubbish, everyday litter and even unwanted animals – the cats Lucy now cares for were abandoned in the woods. But with a little time and a lot of community spirit, Lucy and many dedicated volunteers have changed this wood from an eyesore to a thriving home for all kinds of wildlife. However, litter is still a huge ongoing problem. Most weeks, Lucy and the volunteers pick up everything from tyres to clothes, plastic bags to drink cans – all of which can threaten the safety of the animals in the wood. Lucy told us about a bird trapped in netting, rivers blocked by rubbish, and a hedgehog that eventually died after being caught in an elastic band. This is heartbreaking because it’s so easy to avoid. However, Lucy and her team recycle as much rubbish as they can, and they won’t give up. They are determined to save this natural habitat for generations to come.

Did you know?

- Around 69,000 animals are killed every year in the UK from litter.
- Every two hours the RSPCA answers a call about an animal that has been harmed by rubbish.

Little acts of kindness

Animals like hedgehogs can get caught in elastic bands, or foxes and dogs might eat them. If you see one, pick it up, give it a snip, and put it in the bin – or reuse it.





Even discarded toys can be life threatening. The seal above spent months with the RSPCA after a plastic ring had cut deep into her neck, making eating and drinking difficult. But after intensive veterinary care, she was returned safely to the wild.

How we can help prevent wild animal injuries

All it takes is a bit of thought and a few simple acts of kindness to help save the lives of wild animals everywhere.



Litter

Empty containers, cans and discarded plastic rings that hold cans together are all hazardous for animals, so pop them in the rubbish or recycling bin. Remember to cut up the plastic rings first. Why not pick up just five bits of litter when you're out? It helps save lives and preserves the environment.

Slow down

Every year, more than 10,000 deer are severely injured or killed by vehicles, especially during May and from October to January. Always drive carefully, particularly near woodland areas and around dusk and dawn. If you see one deer, slow down as there are often more around.

Did you know?

- Every year around 17,000 wild animals are admitted to RSPCA wildlife centres.
- In 2017, 350 seals were taken into RSPCA care for rehabilitation.

What to do if you find an injured wild animal

1

Watch the animal for a little while to see how badly it is hurt.



2

Never try to handle or transport an injured deer, seal, wild boar, otter, badger, fox, snake, bird of prey (including owls), swan, goose, heron, gull, whale, dolphin or porpoise. Keep a safe distance and call us on: **0300 1234 999**. Never try to free an animal from a snare or trap; you risk hurting yourself and the animal, and it could be an offence if the animal was legally caught.

3

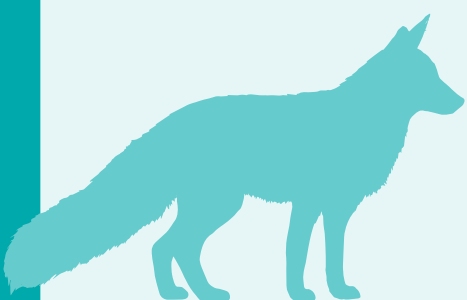
If it's safe to catch and handle the animal then, ideally wearing gloves to protect your hands, place the animal into a secure cardboard box with ventilation holes, lined with a towel or newspaper. Keep the animal quiet and take them to a nearby vet or wildlife rehabilitator (always call first).

4

If it's not safe, or you're unable to move or transport the animal, call us on: **0300 1234 999**. If possible, contain the animal before calling.

Little acts of kindness

Animals can get trapped in sports nets of all shapes and sizes. So at the end of a game, remove them or lift and tie them up. Also, check your garden and pond netting regularly or replace with solid mesh.



A close-up photograph of an egg carton. The carton is white with a blue and red logo that says 'RSPCA ASSURED'. The word 'EGGS' is printed in large, light blue letters. A single brown egg is visible in one of the compartments of the carton.

It takes everyone to care when a farmer is fair - with a check to the back of the packet

We can all shop in a way that's kinder to animals: every time you purchase a product containing meat, milk or eggs you have the power to make a difference.

All farm animals deserve to have a good life. That's why we work closely with farmers, hauliers and slaughterhouses to ensure that our higher standards of animal welfare are being met. It's also why we'll continue to press for more supermarkets and restaurants to sell and serve RSPCA Assured labelled products.

“RSPCA labels make it easier when you're shopping – if the label is there, you know it's been cared for.”

Judith Chamberlain
RSPCA Assured shopper

Did you know?

By choosing RSPCA Assured labelled products, you know they've come from animals that have been cared for to RSPCA higher welfare standards.

Look for the logo

RSPCA Assured is our ethical food label dedicated to farm animal welfare. Our labelling scheme is completely independent from the food and farming industries and goes above and beyond minimum legal requirements – so farm animals have a better life.



Where to buy

- Aldi
- HelloFresh
- McDonald's
- Lidl
- M&S
- Tesco
- Co-op
- Sainsbury's
- Wetherspoon

A better quality of life

RSPCA welfare standards aim to give farm animals a better quality of life. This includes:



More space



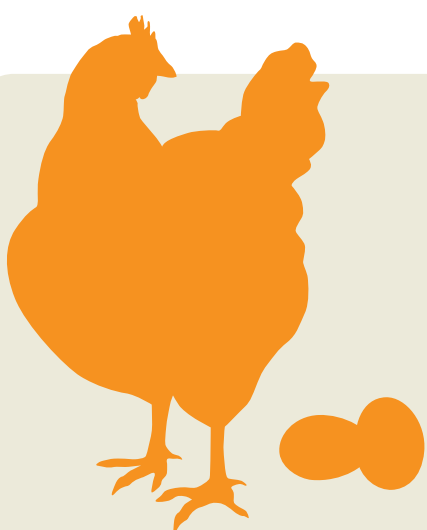
Natural lighting



Comfy bedding



Shade and shelter



Little acts of kindness

Can't see your local supermarket or restaurant chain in the list above? Or simply want them to stock a larger range of RSPCA Assured labelled products? Lobby them today at: rspcaassured.org.uk/get-involved





It takes safe hands and time for all to be fine

“I always say Rolo’s an RSPCA rescue dog because I want people to see for themselves that rescues can be the most loving dogs.”

Claire Dean, Rolo’s owner

Rolo didn’t start life in a kind, warm home. He was born in a freezing, filthy shed on an appalling puppy farm. However, thanks to the RSPCA – and the kindness of his new forever family – Rolo has gone from a neglected pup to a four-legged friend to many.

Puppy farms are horrific places. As a tiny pup, Rolo was cramped together with 30 other dogs. He was dangerously thin and infected with E. coli, and two of his siblings had already died.

Thankfully, all the remaining dogs were rescued and rushed to the vet where they were treated and successfully rehomed. All apart from Rolo, who was too ill to leave the surgery.

But after a lot of extra care and a few weeks in a foster home, Rolo was ready to start his life again. This time with the kind Dean family, who always wanted to give a rescue dog a safe home. But this is just the beginning of Rolo’s amazing story...

Did you know?

Every year the RSPCA gives more than 45,000 animals a second chance with a new forever home.



“Rolo and I visit the hospital once a week and go up to the children’s ward, oncology and sometimes the stroke ward.”

Claire Dean,
Rolo’s owner

This little puppy, who nearly didn’t make it, is now a Pets As Therapy (PAT) dog – visiting a local hospital and making patients of all ages smile.

He visits the children’s ward for pats and chats, which can really help take a child’s mind off their treatment. Claire and Rolo also visit patients on the stroke ward, where Rolo brings a little joy to those who might be struggling with mobility and also missing their pets.

“As soon as we go into a ward you can feel the atmosphere lift.”

But it’s not just the patients who love these visits. Claire told us that everyone from hospital cleaners to consultants love seeing Rolo. And Rolo loves all the attention too. So it seems that this calm, friendly rescue pup brightens up everyone’s day – which is particularly heartwarming when you consider that he had such a difficult and unhappy start in life.

“He’s come such a long way from when we first got him. He’s made so many people happy and given them cheer and comfort. I’m immensely proud of him.”

Could you offer a rescue animal a kind new home?

Rehoming an animal from the RSPCA would be a great act of kindness, which could change an animal's life forever. Also, if you adopt a dog, you could be helping to put a stop to the cruel puppy trade and unscrupulous breeders.



1

Visit: www.rspca.org.uk/findapet

All sorts of RSPCA animals are looking for a forever home, from cats to chinchillas, lovebirds to lizards.

2

Fill out an application form

Then, arrange a visit to the centre to see if you're a good match and get to know your pet. If you're a match, consider bringing your family for a visit.

3

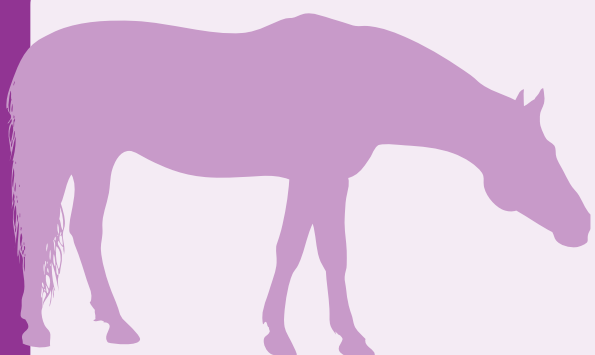
Your home visit

Our volunteer home visitors will talk about specific needs your pet has and how to settle them into a safe, secure and happy life with you.

4

Take your new friend home

Where appropriate we microchip, spay/neuter, vaccinate and make sure your pet has up-to-date flea and worming treatment – all included in your adoption fee.



Little acts of kindness

Can't help rehome an animal right now? How about sponsoring a kennel, cat pod or stable? Find out more at: rspca.org.uk/sponsorship





Maureen has fostered more than 160 cats and kittens for the RSPCA

It takes a safe place to stay until all feels OK

Could you foster an animal?

The role of a fosterer with the RSPCA is a crucial one. Because when you help foster an animal you'll be freeing up space in our centres, so we can rescue more animals in need.

Unlike adopting an animal for life, you might give a temporary home to a rescue dog who needs one-to-one care after an injury, or a timid cat who just needs time to build their confidence. We have all types of animals – including rabbits and horses – ready to meet all types of kind foster carers.

Find out more at:

rspca.org.uk/findapet/foster

“I’ve seen first-hand the dedicated work RSPCA fosterers do. They help animals who’ve been abandoned or treated cruelly to recover and ease them gently into their new caring environments.”

Jo Brand





It takes standing tall so there's protection for all

There are many different issues facing animals today. Many so cruel and barbaric that we need the governments in the UK to step in and take action. Your voice, signature and passion can help make this happen – and change the lives of vulnerable animals everywhere.

“We can all do our bit to ensure we promote acts of kindness for animals. An issue close to my heart is ending hunting with hounds, and although the Government recently announced that the free vote for MPs to potentially overturn the ban on this cruel practice is off the political agenda for now, there is no room for complacency and we must all continue to work hard to enforce the ban.”

Chris Packham, RSPCA Vice-president

Here are a few of our recent animal welfare successes

Stronger sentencing: Longer prison sentences for the most serious animal cruelty will soon be a reality across England and Wales, with maximum sentences being increased from six months to five years.

Puppy breeding: While the demand for puppies remains, protecting the welfare of dogs and puppies involved in the breeding industry is essential. Following our campaigning, new rules have come in across England and Wales protecting the welfare of dogs used in the puppy breeding industry.

Closer to ending the use of wild animals in circuses:

After decades of campaigning, the use of wild animals in circuses is finally set to be banned in England and Wales within the next few years. Travelling animal shows will also be regulated in Wales.

We still need your help

Sign up to our campaign network today at:

rspca.org.uk/giveanimalsavoice



Could you be an RSPCA volunteer?

We are always on the lookout for kind volunteers who can give a little time to help out in a number of practical ways. There are around 60 different types of volunteering and fundraising roles, which range from dog walking to marathon running. Here are just a few to inspire you:

Wildlife casualty volunteer:

We'll train you to collect and transport sick, injured and suffering birds and small animals to a vet or RSPCA wildlife centre.

Fundraising:

Fun events like sponsored dog walks and skydiving can help raise vital money for the RSPCA. So, whether your skills lie in organising, or you're more hands-on, you'll be making a huge difference to animals' lives.

Charity shop volunteer:

From window dressing to clothes sorting, there are many volunteering roles in our 330 RSPCA shops.

Gardening and maintenance:

If you're a keen gardener, you could put your green fingers to good use at your local animal centre.

Home visitor:

When people adopt rescue animals from the RSPCA, we need people to visit their homes to make sure the new owners are a good match and able to meet the animals' needs.

For all volunteering roles and fundraising ideas, visit:

rspca.org.uk/getinvolved/volunteer



Little acts of kindness

Inspire the next generation to be kinder to animals. We're always on the lookout for passionate volunteers to talk to school children about animals and our vital work.

It takes getting involved 'til the problems get solved



For more advice on being kinder to animals, or to give a gift to help support our vital work, visit our website at:
rspca.org.uk

#AnimalKind



Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

www.rspca.org.uk

facebook.com/RSPCA

twitter.com/RSPCA_official

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