

Autumn/Winter 2026



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Branch Manager Round-up

Hello and welcome to our latest newsletter. Autumn is my favourite season and, with our Animal Centre surrounded by beautiful woodland, our team gets to enjoy the ever-changing colours as the season unfolds.

It's been a year of transition for our branch and, like many charities, we are adapting to the continuing economic challenges facing us all. Our charity is entering a new chapter following recent organisational changes at our Animal Centre. While the process has been incredibly tough for all involved, these changes have been made to put the charity on a stronger, more sustainable footing for the future. Our purpose remains unchanged: to improve the lives of animals and ensure we can continue doing so for many years to come.

Despite these challenges, we've enjoyed a record-breaking Open Day & Fun Dog Show, continue to provide veterinary support for more pets than ever across Suffolk, and are incredibly grateful for our brilliant team of colleagues and volunteers.

As we approach Christmas (I said it!), we're looking forward to a season of warmth, gratitude and renewed purpose. Our shops are preparing their festive displays, while our event teams will be out and about bringing festive cheer on the cold days and nights ahead.

Thank you for your continued support. It truly makes a world of difference to the lives of so many animals.



Terry Cleaver

Seasonal Wildlife Advice



This autumn animals will seek warmer places to rest, so there are some essential checks you need to make to avoid disturbing or injuring them.

As piles of leaves gather on the ground, hedgehogs especially enjoy nestling into them for coverage and warmth. Frogs and mice do too! We urge you to be careful with tools, bonfires, or fun leaf piles that children enjoy jumping into in case a small creature has found safety in there. Always carefully check first.

Your garden may be dying back as the colder weather approaches, but dried plants, fallen leaves, stalks that once resembled a flower are all essential hiding spots for insects and wildlife, offering them a place to hide from the weather and predators over winter.

Birds may find it harder to find their normal food in winter, but you can help them stay strong by leaving out extra food. Never try to use antifreeze or salt to thaw frozen ponds, birdbaths or any water container used by animals. Consider leaving some tidy up jobs for the spring and give wildlife a place to live this winter.



HAPPY HOME UPDATE



Twister & Solero

After more than 450 days in our care, Twister and Solero have finally found their forever home!

The father-and-son duo are now settling into life with experienced ferret owners who have been adopting from our branch for over ten years.

Twister and Solero were great fun to care for, but they arrived with some unwanted behaviours that our team spent time working on. Ferrets have bursts of high energy, that can sometimes make interactions overstimulating and lead to behaviours such as nipping.

Using positive training techniques, including station training, we were able to make handling the boys safer and easier – with a tasty treat as their reward! They picked it up quickly and made great progress.

A lot of work goes on behind the scenes at our Animal Centre to make sure animals leave us in great shape, both physically and mentally. We're so pleased Twister and Solero have found a family who can give them all the play, love and stimulation they need to thrive. If you'd like to donate some ferret paste to help with our training, we'd be incredibly grateful... we get through quite a lot!

Scan for our
Amazon Wishlist



Fundraising Catch-up



Our long, hot summer brought a few challenges for our events team, with some events rescheduled due to the high temperatures. Despite this, we enjoyed a jam-packed programme and broke several fundraising records!

We kicked off our Fun Dog Show series in Aldeburgh on 26 April, raising nearly £1,500, followed by our annual Family Fun Day at our Martlesham Animal Centre and stalls at the Hadleigh and Suffolk Shows. We also hosted our first golf day, the Ryder Pup, with our friends at RSPCA Essex Mid & North Branch, and joined the fun at Stowmarket and Felixstowe Carnivals and at Suffolk Dog Day.

The highlight so far was our Martlesham Open Day & Fun Dog Show on 4 September. Hundreds of visitors joined us, along with an amazing array of dogs, helping us raise over £3,700!

If you'd like to volunteer at any of our events, we'd love to hear from you. Find out more on our website or scan the QR code above.





WELFARE CLINIC NEWS

New welfare clinics opened

We have opened six new Welfare Clinics in 2026, improving the reach across Suffolk to avoid customers having to travel to our original Ipswich Welfare Clinic to get help.

These clinics are open six days a week for longer hours, all helping animals receive help quickly. We now have seven clinics in total, based in Felixstowe, Ipswich (x3), Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Long Melford and Newmarket and we are projected to help over 1,500 local families with low incomes keep their pets happy and healthy by the end of this year.

Local charity partnerships

We have put in place an agreement with Cats Protection to signpost eligible clients to them for cat neutering vouchers. We are also pleased to be making progress with collaborative partnerships with other local animal charities and will be hosting the next Association of Dog and Cat Homes East of England regional meeting at our Animal Centre.

Thank you to corporate volunteer teams

It's been a busy time for corporate volunteering teams helping us update and refresh our sites as the weather has been so nice.

We have had help fixing potholes in the lane to our Animal Centre, bench painting, fence painting, and lots of painting with our Ipswich Welfare Clinic and Animal Centre admin offices getting a total overhaul. So many kind volunteers worked so hard to help our team get long-needed projects completed and we thank you all.



Fred Olsen painting at the Welfare Clinic



Crane road repairs at the Animal Centre



Gallagher painting at the Animal Centre



Gallagher painting at the Welfare Clinic



Crane fence painting at the Animal Centre



Fred Olsen painting at the Animal Centre



Drax Ltd painting at the Welfare Clinic

CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS!

We hosted a series of 'thank you' days at our Martlesham Animal Centre in September and October where we were joined by volunteers across all aspects of our branch - home visitors, fosterers, animal centre helpers and trustees as well as volunteers from our Ipswich clinic and those that help at our events and collections!

They were fantastic days, where volunteers were given tours of the animal centre, heard about the amazing work done by the team, met the animals in our care and were updated on the upcoming plans for the branch by our Branch Manager, Terry.

We also celebrated volunteers who have been donating their time to us for over five years - including Sue Whitbread who has fostered over 44 cats for us and has been working with the cat team for 17 amazing years! We will be rolling out this appreciation programme across all our volunteer roles over the next few months.



New volunteer programme

We also announced the introduction of a new volunteer drive that will be launched around November where our Martlesham Animal Centre team will be searching for volunteers to join them to help support with dog walking, kennel, small animal and cattery care on a regular basis. This will be launched on our website and across our social media channels so please keep an eye out if you are keen to get involved.

Scan for more
volunteering info



Scan for current
volunteer roles





SHOPS UPDATE

Our five charity shops have been busy with lots of amazing donated products on sale and some fantastic new initiatives.

Our Felixstowe store recently introduced a new bra bank. Fund-raiser Lorna recently dropped off a donation saying *"I've been hoarding old bras for years, not feeling I could put them in a donation bag, but they were too nice to throw away - this is the perfect solution and I am glad they will help raise funds to help local animals."* Not only will this stop unwanted bras going into landfill, but it will definitely raise money for our branch!

Our Reynolds Road shop got into the festive spirit early and ran a 'Santa in September' shopping event for those who couldn't wait to start buying festive decorations and gifts.

Finally, we have created a central Facebook Group for all our charity shop news - you can find this by searching 'RSPCA Suffolk Central Charity Shops' or linking from our main branch Facebook page.



Have you ever thought of giving a home to a farm cat?

Do you have a stable or small holding suitable for a feline friend?

We currently have six cats in our care looking for this type of home, and some can even be rehomed together.

Some cats are naturally more independent and don't want to be in close proximity to people like a pet cat would. These cats are generally lower maintenance and need someone to oversee their day-to-day care by providing daily food, water, a warm safe shelter and someone to make sure they are healthy/seek vet care if necessary.

These cats often find themselves stuck in rescue for many months, or years, and it's a far from ideal place for a cat who doesn't enjoy human company due to the close proximity in which we have to work with them.

If you are interested in providing a home for these type of cats or have any questions, please contact info@rspca-suffolkcentral.org.uk to speak to a member of the cattery team.



LONG STAY ANIMALS

These lovely animals have been with us for some time and are still hoping for a home of their own. Could you give them the fresh start they deserve? Contact our team at info@rspca-suffolkcentral.org.uk. To meet all our animals waiting for homes, visit our website or scan the QR code.



Ruby

Our lovely cover star, Ruby, has been in our care for over 300 days. Rescued by inspectors on welfare grounds, little is known about her past. Our Kennel Team has spent seven months helping her prepare for a new home through rehabilitation and training.

Affectionate, playful and intelligent, Ruby needs experienced owners who are confident handling larger dogs. They'll need to provide physical and mental stimulation, follow her behaviour plan and continue her training around other dogs.

Ruby loves her toys and balls, racing around our enclosed field and relaxing in the garden with her favourite people. Her morning greetings - full-body wags and a little chitchat - always make us smile. She travels brilliantly and is always ready for an adventure!

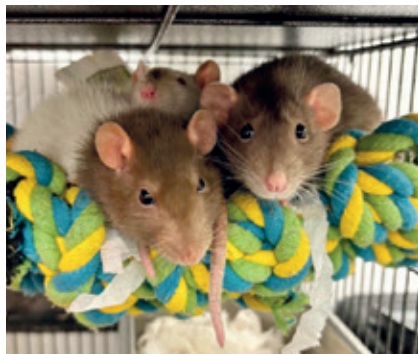
If Ruby could be your new best friend, please get in touch.

Hopper, Stevie & Wilma

Hopper and her sisters came into our care over 300 days ago, after one of our inspectors found them living in an unsuitable environment.

We believe their previous life was very stressful, leaving them wary and nervous around people. Working closely with a behaviourist, we've been helping them build confidence at their own pace, with plenty of patience and positive rewards. It's lovely to see them gradually becoming more comfortable with us. Their future adopters will need to continue following their behaviour plan to help them feel secure and learn to trust people.

The girls love the safety of their cage, where plenty of enrichment keeps their busy minds occupied. Once they've tired themselves out foraging, you'll find them snuggled up together in their favourite hide.



EVENTS DIARY 2026:

We've got a few more events planned for the rest of 2026, with more to be announced, but here's some dates for your diary!

Charity Quiz Night - Martlesham	Saturday 17 October, 7pm for 7.30pm start St Michael's Church Centre, IP5 3PL
Bury St Edmunds Fun Dog Show	Sunday 25 October, 11.30am-3.30pm Great Barton Village Hall, Elms Close IP31 2NR
Big Sporty Quiz Night - Ipswich	Thursday 29 October, 6.30pm for 7pm start Ipswich Town Football Club, IP1 2DA
Holbrook Christmas Fayre	Saturday 14 November, 10am-2pm Holbrook Village Hall, Holbrook IP9 2PZ
Christmas Concert and pet celebration	Friday 11 December, 6.30pm for 7pm start St John the Baptist Church, Felixstowe IP11 7PW

We will also have stalls at other festive events including:

Helmingham Hall illuminated light trail	19-22 November, 4-9pm
Bury St Edmunds Christmas light switch-on	19 November, from 3pm
Framlingham Christmas light switch-on	27 November, from 4-8pm
Stowmarket Christmas Fair	29 November
Woodbridge Christmas Street Fair	6 December



We're updating our events listings all the time, so keep an eye on our website and socials or scan the QR code



Contact us

General Enquiries	0300 999 7321 (9am - 4.30pm)	info@rspca-suffolkcentral.org.uk
Financial Assistance	0300 330 1406 (9.30am - 4pm)	welfare@rspca-suffolkcentral.org.uk
Ipswich Welfare Clinic	01473 231972	clinic@rspca-suffolkcentral.org.uk
	<i>(Clinic open 11.30am - 1pm)</i>	

RSPCA Martlesham Animal Centre, Mill lane, Martlesham, Woodbridge, IP12 4PD

www.rspca-suffolkcentral.org.uk