



THE BLUE CROSS
Britain's pet charity

ANNUAL REVIEW
2009





our mission

To provide a service meeting all the welfare needs of companion animals through treatment, advice and support, and finding them caring homes



The Blue Cross provides practical support, information and advice for pet and horse owners

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 Gordon is just one of the dogs at our Lewknor Adoption Centre looking for a home





The year in pictures



◀ **January** Litters of kittens are found dumped in boxes. This marks the start of a rise in the number of unwanted and abandoned kittens in 2009.

▶ **February** We produce a guide to choosing a healthy pet, following widespread criticism of pedigree dog breeding.

▶▶ **March** Our tenth charity shop, in Stow-on-the-Wold, opens in style with a visit from local TV star Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen.



▶ **August** Sandbag, a stray dog befriended by British soldiers in Iraq, flies back to the UK with three other 'mascot' pets after we work with other animal charities to rescue them from an uncertain future.

▶▶ **September** We unveil our new facilities at Thirsk and Southampton Adoption Centres, plus our Grimsby Animal Hospital celebrates its 50th birthday.

◀ **June** Our Merton Animal Hospital celebrates its tenth birthday with the help of actress Annette Crosbie.

▶ **July** The Society for Companion Animal Studies works with Nick Palmer MP to prepare his ten-minute rule bill on allowing older people to keep their pets when moving into residential care.





◀ **April** We urge people not to give real bunnies as Easter gifts as we reveal the shocking increase in rabbits being abandoned at this time of year.

▶ **May** Our annual Tea Party raises £34,000 and actress Pam Ferris pops in to show her support.



◀ **October** Actress Felicity Kendal presents a BBC Lifeline Appeal about The Blue Cross.

◀ **November** Blue Cross Chief Executive Kim Hamilton and education volunteer Robert Stuhldreer attend the Animals in War ceremony.

▶ **December** We hold our Celebration of Christmas Carol Concert in London.



Chief Executive and Chairman's welcome

THE TOUGH ECONOMIC CLIMATE CHALLENGED ANIMAL WELFARE NEEDS IN 2009, BUT THANKS TO OUR MAGNIFICENT SUPPORTERS, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONTINUE TO DELIVER FIRST-CLASS SERVICES TO AS MANY ANIMALS AS POSSIBLE...



Kim Hamilton
Chief Executive

Welcome to The Blue Cross Annual Review 2009. As the recession deepened we saw the effects of the financial crisis on animal welfare needs in many different ways. Our adoption centres took in more abandoned animals and our hospitals received many calls from people asking about our services because they had either lost their jobs or feared they might do soon.

But, despite the tough external environment, our supporters continued to help us when no doubt they, as everyone else, were feeling the pinch. It's thanks to them that we were able to continue to deliver first-class services.

In 2009, we carried out 73,213 veterinary consultations, rehomed 6,466 small animals and cared for 142 horses, with a further 498 out on loan. We were also delighted to unveil our fantastic new facilities at our Thirsk and Southampton Adoption Centres.

We also worked very hard to develop a new vision for The Blue Cross to make sure we can meet future needs. We need to ensure that we are effective with the funds we receive, and that we have a presence in the areas we are most needed and have the maximum impact on animal welfare.

We have now finalised our vision and strategic plan, and look forward to a challenging and exciting future which will move us towards becoming the leading provider and promoter of companion animal welfare across the UK.

Thank you again for your support.



▶ Gabby is one of the many horses to have been successfully rehomed under our equine loan scheme

AT THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING I SHALL be retiring as Chairman of The Blue Cross Board of Trustees, an office I have been privileged to hold since 2001. For this reason, rather than commenting only on 2009, I am tempted to make more general comments.

For over a century, The Blue Cross has thrived and developed in times of crisis, whether in wartime or, as now, in an economic depression. We succeeded in meeting challenges in the past as we shall succeed in meeting those we now face.

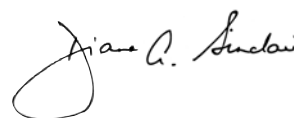
On the frontline are our four animal hospitals where treatment of a very high standard is provided by dedicated veterinary and nursing staff for pet owners who cannot afford private fees, and whose beloved pet is often their only companion. The welfare of companion animals is inextricably linked to that of their owners; particularly the lonely, the elderly, people with disabilities or those who are otherwise disadvantaged. For them The Blue Cross provides a lifeline. We have continued to increase our veterinary provision by establishing clinics at several of our centres.

For those who, for whatever reason, must sadly part with their pets, our adoption centres are the key to a secure future for those animals, just as they may be able to find the ideal companion for someone wanting to adopt an animal in need. We take pride in ensuring that all the animals entrusted to our care are vaccinated, and have any health or behaviour problems addressed before they leave us.

We receive no public funding and so are entirely dependent upon donations, fundraising activities and the wonderful practical contribution of an army of volunteers. My heartfelt thanks go to them, to every single member of staff and to my colleagues on the Board.



Diane Sinclair
Chairman





“Tessa’s doing extremely well. She’s turned out to be an absolutely **perfect dog**”

DUMPED ON A GOLF COURSE IN THE FREEZING COLD, left tied to a lamppost on a quiet road and even found down a rubbish chute – these are just some of the unwanted animals who came to need our care last year.

Our adoption centres took in 6,508 animals, an increase of 8.5 per cent on 2008 and among these many were stray, dumped or abandoned. We also took in 340 animals through our pet fostering scheme.

Head of Companion Animal Welfare, Mandy Jones, says: “We saw the effects of the tough economic climate in 2009 – there was a 65 per cent rise in the number of animals brought in for financial reasons. There has also been an increase in abandoned cases. We wish people would bring their animals to us and not just dump them.”

Last year our adoption centres took in 920 kittens – a 14 per cent rise.

Mandy adds: “It’s not as easy to rehome kittens as it used to be. It could be because people are more cautious as they know they have to pay veterinary fees for things like neutering and vaccinations or because they are worried about losing their jobs and don’t want to take on a financial commitment.”

Despite the challenges, we continued to ensure a brighter future for thousands of needy animals. Our adoption centres rehomed 6,153 animals with a further 313 rehomed through our pet fostering scheme, and we also unveiled our fantastic new facilities in Thirsk and Southampton.

Thirsk now benefits from a refurbished adoption centre following a £1.8 million development project. It has provided state-of-the-art kennels for dogs, a dedicated puppy and kitten facility, an isolation block to prevent the spread of disease, an undercover play barn to exercise and train dogs in all weathers, and an admissions area for new arrivals to settle in.

Southampton also got a £1.5 million makeover to provide a new veterinary clinic for local pet owners on low incomes, an isolation unit, an admissions block, puppy and kitten unit and refurbished dog kennels.

Mandy says: “These facilities have improved the environment for the animals in our care, not to mention a better environment for staff who are working hard to look after the animals and for customers who are coming to adopt them. The opening of the welfare clinic in Southampton has provided a huge benefit to the local community.”

▶ This unwanted kitten was handed in to our Southampton Adoption Centre



**REAL LIVES
MIKE & TESSA**

Border collie Tessa was the first animal to be rehomed from our new and improved adoption centre at Thirsk.

The youngster didn’t have a good start to life and desperately needed a loving, kind home where she could build her confidence, and staff were hoping to find the perfect owner to match her needs.

Now she’s found that home and is thriving. Her new owner, Mike Weighell, says: “Tessa’s doing extremely well. She’s turned out to be an absolutely perfect dog. I live on a farm and when she arrived she was petrified of animals, but her border collie instinct kicked in and now she loves to round up the sheep, ride on the tractor and come with me for long walks on the North Yorkshire moors.

“She’s very well settled, very well natured – she’s a dream dog.”

**65%
INCREASE IN
ANIMALS BROUGHT
IN FOR FINANCIAL
REASONS**



“It’s thanks to The Blue Cross that I’m able to have Lucky”

MORE AND MORE PEOPLE TURNED TO THE BLUE CROSS

to see if we could help them with veterinary care for their pets.

Our four animal hospitals reported a huge increase in people calling to register or to ask about registering in the future because their jobs were under threat.

In total, we carried out 73,213 consultations, 11,240 operations and 17,313 diagnostic procedures in 2009.

The number of consultations at our adoption centre clinics increased by nearly 40 per cent, from 1,392 in 2008 to 1,934 in 2009.

Our hospitals saw more unwanted animals, with some pets not being collected by their owner after a stay in hospital. Staff also found animals tied up outside or left in cat boxes on the doorstep.

One of those abandoned was Moby, a young dog who was tied to a lamppost and left on the same road as one of our hospitals. His owner never returned.

Last year we announced plans to withdraw our Veterinary Care Fund (VCF), which we have now done. This was a very difficult decision to make, but it was felt that, in this financial climate, the VCF was not the most cost-effective way to help pet owners on low incomes.

It was a year of birthdays for our hospitals with Merton celebrating its tenth anniversary and Grimsby turning 50. The Blue Cross opened its first animal hospital in Grimsby on 25 September 1959, and the current site was opened in 2005.

Veterinary staff past and present were joined by the Mayor of Grimsby, Earl of Yarborough and invited guests to celebrate the major milestone.

Chief Veterinary Surgeon at Grimsby, Wendy Adams, says: “It’s fantastic to know we have been helping animals in Grimsby for 50 years. It’s so rewarding for all the vets and nurses to help poorly pets who may otherwise go untreated and to see how much it means to their owners. Everyone worked hard to make the anniversary a success – it was an amazing team effort.”

Merton Animal Hospital was opened by the late Queen Mother on 24 June 1999. To celebrate its birthday, actress and animal lover Annette Crosbie joined hospital staff, clients and pets to serve a special cake.

Our facilities in Victoria had an upgrade, including an expanded isolation unit with walk-in kennels and a revamped reception area. We opened our second operating theatre at our Merton hospital and bought a new X-ray processor at Hammersmith.

▶ Veterinary surgeon Elizabeth Willan operating on dog Fyfe at Grimsby Animal Hospital



REAL LIVES MAUREEN & LUCKY

When Maureen Harritzia retired, she couldn’t afford a private vet any more. For her, The Blue Cross has been a lifeline.

Her miniature poodle, Lucky, suffers from irritable bowel syndrome and recurrent pancreatitis and has been a regular visitor to both our animal hospitals in Merton and Victoria.

Maureen says: “They are brilliant; I can’t fault The Blue Cross. The staff have been fantastic. One time Lucky was so ill, I didn’t think he would make it, but they saved his life.

“The ambulance crew has taken him to hospital and back and the community vet nurse has even been to my home when I haven’t been well enough to go into the hospital or when I forgot his medication. It’s thanks to The Blue Cross that I’m able to have Lucky.”

**73,213
CONSULTATIONS
CARRIED OUT,
11,240 OPERATIONS
PERFORMED**



“We are singing the praises of The Blue Cross to everyone we meet!”

OUR EQUINE CENTRES WELCOMED 55 NEW FACES IN 2009, bringing the number of horses and ponies in our total ownership to 640. We also placed 102 horses out on loan, giving us a total of 498 on our loan scheme, and cared for 142 at our three centres collectively. Among these are Jenny and Percy, two Shetland ponies that had lived in a shed all their lives, only occasionally being allowed out into a tiny yard. The mum and son, aged 15 and five, had never been turned out to grass.

After arriving at our equine centre in Rolleston, staff worked very hard to get them used to human contact before gradually introducing them to grass.

Deputy Centre Manager Becky Smith says: “It was lovely to turn Jenny and Percy out onto grass for the first time. Having spent a lifetime without it, they were very keen to make up for lost time but we introduced them to grazing slowly to avoid digestive problems.”

Alice came to our equine centre at Burford with 19 other horses because her owner couldn’t cope any more.

The 16-year-old Shire horse was in poor condition with severely overgrown feet. But thanks to the care and experience of our staff, she regained her health and was placed on loan as a companion in a loving home.

Our rehomed horses and ponies are thriving in their new homes.

Mallow, a fantastic children’s pony, picked up trophies at a series of competitions last year and even competed at the Royal Windsor Horse Show.

Our sponsor-a-pony scheme goes from strength to strength and we now have around 600 sponsors. We currently have eight very worthy horses and ponies to choose from. They include ex-racehorse Timmy who came to our equine retirement centre at Northiam after his owners were no longer able to care for him. Timmy is very anxious but he has settled in well and made firm friends with another horse, Seymour.

Thanks to a new purpose-built, four-horse lorry, which will be used by all our centres, we can now collect and deliver twice as many horses and ponies at any one time and in greater safety and comfort.

Our staff also attended many equine events throughout the year, talking about the work of the charity and promoting equine rehoming, and our horse ambulance was on duty for more than 40 days at events.

▶ Shetland ponies Rocky and Scotty at Burford Equine Centre



REAL LIVES SLINKY & OSCAR

When 30-year-old retired hunter Oscar’s companion Rolly died in a tragic freak accident in the field, he was distressed about suddenly being on his own.

His owners, Trevor and Annie Cooper, contacted our equine centre in Burford for urgent help.

Centre staff had the perfect match – retired part-thoroughbred Slinky.

The pair were introduced to each other and soon became firm friends.

Trevor says: “It’s as if he’s been here for ever. It was terrible to lose Rolly so tragically, but we have been overwhelmed by The Blue Cross’s support in helping us through our crisis.

“Slinky’s a dear boy and his arrival has cheered us all up immensely, especially Oscar. Now we are singing the praises of The Blue Cross to everyone we meet.”

102
HORSES
REHOMED



"A well-trained dog is a happy dog"

WHEN OUR DOGS HEAD OFF TO THEIR NEW HOMES,

we want to make sure they're prepared for the future.

In 2009, we developed Life Skills for Dogs, a checklist of 14 basic skills that will help to ensure dogs have a successful integration into their new lives.

Following a pilot scheme, we rolled the programme out across all our adoption centres in autumn.

When a dog comes into our care, staff work through the list and record what they have achieved. Tasks include response to name, calm people-and-dog greeting, recall, take it, leave it, sit, down, wait and settle.

During the matching process we demonstrate to new owners what stage the dog is up to and encourage them to join a local dog-training class to continue with the Life Skills.

In 2010, working with dog-trainer associations, we are extending the scheme to local trainers who will help the adopters work through the skills.

When they complete 12 out of 14 skills they can send the completed list back to us with the trainer's signature and we will issue a certificate and a rosette.

Blue Cross Head of Behaviour Services, Julie Bedford, says: "A well-trained dog is a happy dog and this programme provides them with the basic skills to be a great companion and to take part in family life in their new homes. I'm delighted that Life Skills is now up and running at all our adoption centres and I'm looking forward to moving the next stage of the project forward in 2010."

In 2009, our behavioural team carried out 1,013 consultations and assessments and responded to 1,228 phone calls and emails. They delivered 32 days of training courses, gave lectures and worked alongside other organisations to improve the welfare of animals.

The advice and support given by the behaviour team has helped adopters of dogs, cats and rabbits to build strong, happy relationships. Some of the more challenging dogs with exceptional talent were selected by the behaviour team and have gone on to be trained as drug, explosive, bio-detection and assistance dogs. So by saving dogs' lives, they are now saving human lives.



REAL LIVES NICOLA & PENNY

Penny had a troubled past and when she came into our care she felt frightened and didn't trust anyone.

Animal Behaviourist Ryan Neile says: "When Penny arrived she had a complete crisis and wouldn't let anybody near her."

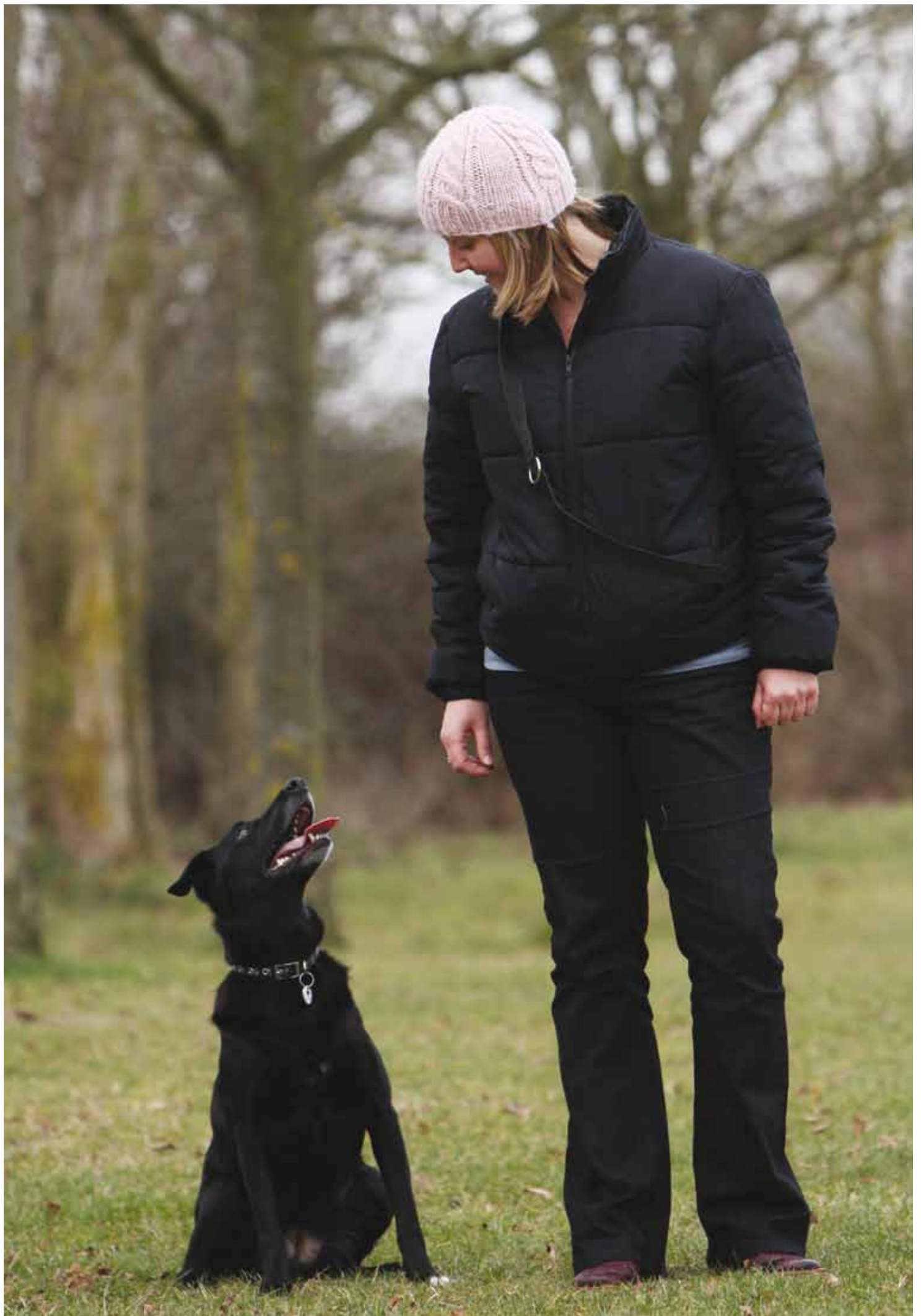
Over six months, our behavioural team and the Burford Adoption Centre staff began to gain Penny's trust and improve her confidence.

Ryan says: "Penny had lots of potential to succeed in a home with the right owner. We had a very specific idea about what sort of owner she needed, and by luck or miracle, that person walked in."

Penny's new owner, Nicola Stephenson, says: "Seeing how well Penny has come on has definitely been worth it. She's had a complete change of personality. She loves cuddles and I could fuss her 24/7."

2,241
CONSULTATIONS
& ASSESSMENTS

▶ Penny takes a walk in the park with her new owner Nicola Stephenson



“It’s amazing to know that we are reaching so many children”

FROM SUPER-SIZED TO SVELTE – THAT WAS THE AIM OF A major education campaign last year. We created Fat Horse Slim to raise awareness of the dangers of equine obesity after 40 per cent of all horses and ponies taken in by our centres in 2008 were overweight.

The campaign was launched at Badminton Horse Trials and backed by some of the UK’s leading riders, including Olympic team members Mary King and William Fox-Pitt.

We hope to tackle the growing problem by providing practical guidelines for every horse keeper to monitor and manage the weight of their horse. The management pack, sponsored by Dengie, is sold at equestrian events and is also available to order online and by telephone.

Blue Cross Equine Welfare Education Officer Rosie Mogford says: “It was a big project to take on and we learned a lot by doing it. We were delighted at the positive response and it has been particularly well received by equine vets. We feel there’s a growing understanding among horse owners about the importance of keeping horses at a healthy weight. But there’s still lots of work to do and we still see horses developing health problems and suffering unnecessarily as a result of obesity.”

In 2009, we also introduced our Pony Club Welfare Badge, an achievement badge awarded to Pony Club members who have demonstrated a thorough understanding of equine welfare by taking ten badges with care and management themes.

At schools we produced a new information pack called Animals in Society, which is getting positive feedback. We also held 16 Remembrance Day assemblies, showing the children animals in war photos. In total, we reached 44,600 youngsters last year, an increase of 3,500 on 2008.

Education Development Manager Tracy Genever says: “It’s amazing to know that we are reaching so many children.”

The Society for Companion Animal Studies (SCAS), which works in partnership with The Blue Cross, celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2009 with a conference highlighting the importance of pets for older people, particularly when they move into sheltered housing or residential care.

Demand for SCAS training continues to grow and in 2009, it delivered training in the human-companion animal bond, pet loss support and animal-assisted interventions to professionals from different welfare sectors.

▶ Gentleman Jim stretches his legs at our Burford Equine Centre



REAL LIVES GENTLEMAN JIM

At his last home, Gentleman Jim was taken out of work and turned out to graze on cow pasture. Not only was he not exercising any more, he was on totally unsuitable grazing for a horse.

In just three to four months Jim became obese, and by the time he arrived at our Burford Equine Centre, he weighed a hefty 351kg. An ideal body score for a horse is around three, while five is obese – Jim was a five and in the dangerously obese category.

The 12hh spotted gelding was put on a specific weight-loss regime and our staff gradually reintroduced exercise once he was a healthier weight.

Jim has lost 73kg, the equivalent of a fully grown adult. In doing so, he has dramatically reduced his chances of developing health problems as a result of obesity.

44,600
CHILDREN SEEN
BY OUR
EDUCATION
TEAM



“The hospital is a very friendly place and **everyone makes me feel welcome**”

WHEN RITA O’SULLIVAN WAS DIAGNOSED WITH BREAST CANCER, the aggressive treatment left her feeling very low.

She says: “I found there wasn’t much I could do. I needed something to do and a place where I was useful to somebody.”

Volunteering at our Grimsby Animal Hospital gave Rita that place. She says: “It has given me a purpose. I feel useful here and it’s been excellent for me. You have to have a new role for yourself in life after something like that and volunteering here has given me that role.”

Rita is one of the hundreds of people who provide valuable help on our dedicated volunteer team.

Volunteer Development Manager Karen Allsop says: “Volunteers support The Blue Cross in so many ways and we really couldn’t deliver so much for Britain’s pets without them. Last year our volunteer team grew to more than 1,500 people and together they gave us in the region of 150,000 hours of their time – a 30 per cent increase on 2008. We thank each and every volunteer for this tremendous effort.”

Volunteers come from all over the UK and from all walks of life, including people who are overcoming difficulties.

Karen says: “Volunteering is a good way for people to experience new things, develop their skills and gain confidence – particularly after an illness or time off work – we try to offer this wherever we can.”

We are also grateful to people who lend their expertise to help us. In Tiverton, two professional photographers, who each run their own pet portrait business, generously donate their time to take photos of the animals available for adoption.

Over the last few years, the volunteer programme in our hospitals has grown considerably – volunteer hours have trebled since 2007 and several new roles have been introduced.

For the first time our Victoria Animal Hospital in London recruited five short-term foster carers who look after recuperating animals. Following a successful scheme of volunteer vets at our hospital in Merton, we introduced the same role at Victoria in August. Since then four volunteer vets have clocked up 416 hours working alongside paid staff at the hospital.

Our evening vaccination clinic on Thursdays also relies on volunteers. Regional Volunteering Manager for London, Jill Drummond, says: “We have two volunteers on reception and two in the clinic with the vet. Without the commitment of these volunteers we would not be able to run this service.”

▶ Volunteer Rita O’Sullivan with golden retriever Ben at Grimsby Animal Hospital



REAL LIVES HELEN

Four years ago a stroke turned Helen Gladding’s world upside down.

All of a sudden she had to learn to do again everything she took for granted.

She says: “I was in hospital for three months and in a wheelchair. I had to learn how to read and write all over again.”

The stroke left Helen feeling frustrated and often exhausted. She wanted to get her life back on track so she started volunteering at our animal hospital in Grimsby.

“I help in the packing department, cleaning, sorting and labelling the surgical equipment,” says Helen.

“The hospital is a very friendly place and everyone makes me feel welcome. I go once a week and I love it. It has really helped me because it’s given me a boost to my confidence.”

**150,000
VOLUNTEER
HOURS LOGGED
BY 1,500
VOLUNTEERS**





“We look forward to continuing to help needy pets in Scotland”

IT WAS A FANTASTIC YEAR FOR THE REHOMING PET

fostering service as our growing team of volunteers helped us to look after hundreds of animals.

In 2009, we admitted 340 animals, compared to 144 in 2008, and we rehomed 313 animals – nearly three times as many as in 2008. This increase in fostering activity has truly extended our reach for Blue Cross rehoming services and helped more animals in need.

One of our foster schemes, based in West Yorkshire and led by Rachel Brearley, rehomed their 200th cat – an amazing achievement in just 18 months.

Our collaboration with Pet Fostering Service Scotland (PFSS), announced in July 2008, is also going from strength to strength.

The charity helps pet owners on low incomes who need their animals cared for on a temporary basis, for example, if their home is flooded or they need hospital treatment. We teamed up with them to help ensure that pets who have no home to return to can find caring new owners.

Blue Cross Project Development Officer Denise Young says: “The relationship has developed very well, with 25 cats and dogs rehomed in Scotland in 2009. We look forward to continuing to help needy pets in Scotland.”

WELFARE ASSOCIATES

We work closely with a number of organisations to promote animal welfare and responsible pet ownership and in 2009, we had ten Welfare Associates.

Our newest recruits were Dumfries & Galloway Canine Rescue Centre (D&GCRC) in Scotland and Gozo SPCA Rescue and Rehoming Centre on the Mediterranean island of Gozo in Malta.

Gozo SPCA was founded in 1976 by a group of people dedicated to improving the welfare of small animals on the island and The Blue Cross funded their cat-neutering project.

D&GCRC, registered as a charity in 2003, has a centre that now provides a 30-kennel capacity. The team has worked hard to develop a successful and established canine centre.

Following the outcome of our 2009 Strategic Review, we will be focusing our resources and supporting two UK-based Welfare Associates, Mayflower Sanctuary and Mountains Animal Sanctuary, with effect from the start of 2011.

▶ Pet foster carer Rachel Brearley



REAL LIVES CAT CHALETS

Students can get first-hand experience in animal care and rehoming after we developed unique relationships with Nottingham Trent University (NTU) and Wiltshire College.

Both sites have purpose-built facilities to care for and find new homes for cats.

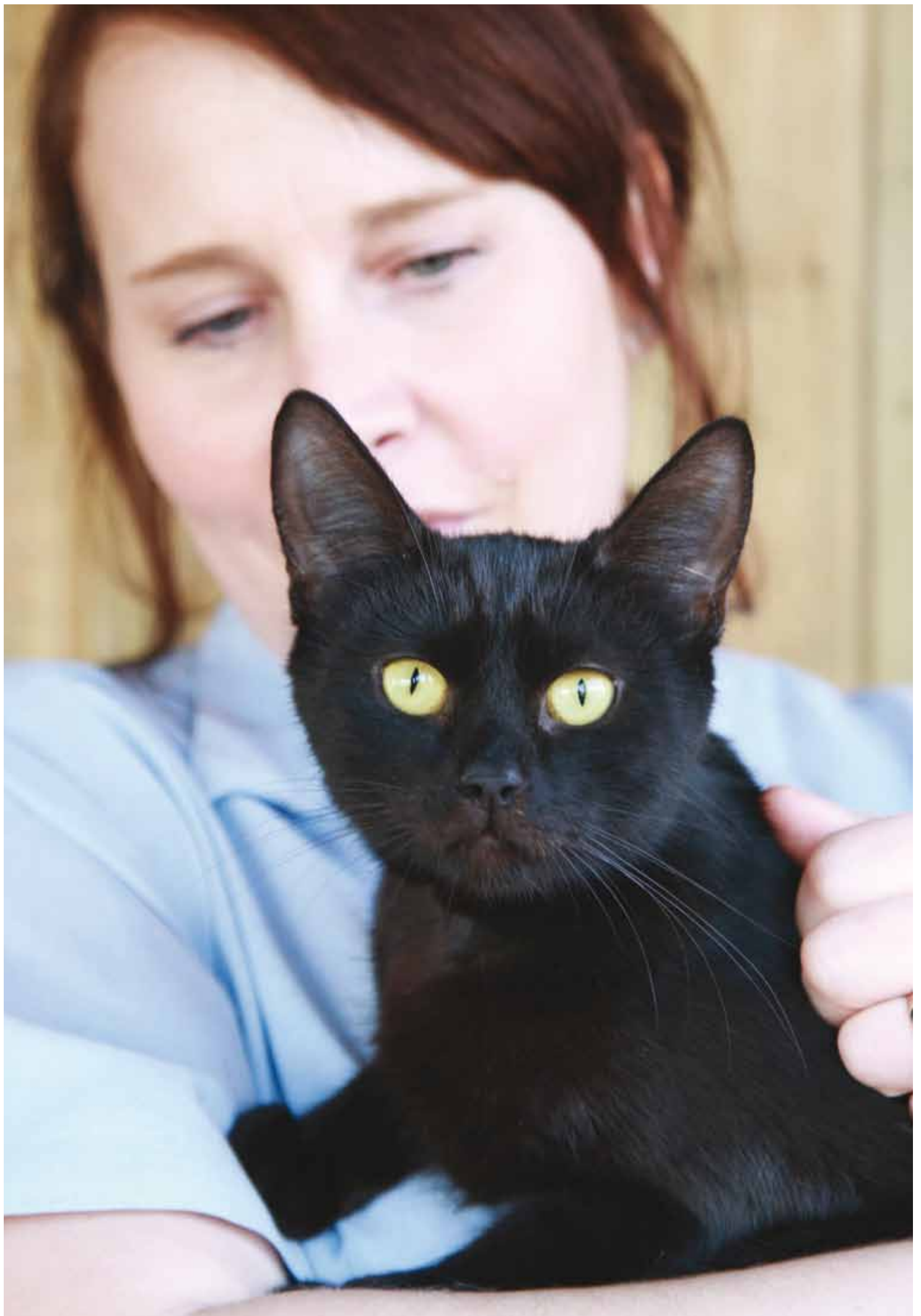
Staff and students play a vital role in helping to provide daily care and in the rehoming process.

In 2009, 27 cats were rehomed and 76 have been rehomed in total since relationships began.

Animal Centre Technician at Wiltshire College, Sally Bailey, says the scheme has benefited the students in a number of ways.

“They can experience first hand what it’s like to work in an animal shelter and are involved in the day-to-day running of it, together with the process of cat admissions and adoptions.”

**313
ANIMALS
REHOMED,
340 ANIMALS
ADMITTED**



“We are in awe of the lengths people will go to raise money for us”

WADING THROUGH JUNGLES, POUNDING THE STREETS

and putting the kettle on were just some of the wonderful ways our supporters helped us in 2009.

Our overseas treks, which took intrepid adventurers to places such as Borneo, Peru and Ecuador, raised £180,000, and £34,000 poured in from our third annual Tea Party.

Events Officer Heather Collin was among the team that went to Borneo. She says: “The group was just amazing; they got on with what they needed to do. You get to the point when you are so tired, your legs feel like jelly and you don’t think you can climb any more but everyone just kept going. They have done The Blue Cross proud.”

At the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon we had our biggest-ever team of 215 runners who raised £80,000.

Events Officer Tracey Chittock says: “It was such a great team and it was lovely to meet everyone at our runners’ reception.”

Hundreds of people also raised money by organising their own event – from shaving moustaches to selling plants.

Tracey says: “We know it’s a hard climate to raise money in at the moment, so we are really proud of everyone who persevered.

“We’d like to say a huge thank you to our supporters. We are in awe of the lengths people will go to raise money for us.”

Our corporate supporters continued to give us invaluable help and these are just some examples of the ways that companies have supported us: We continued to benefit from income from Petplan insurance policies sold to Blue Cross supporters; Hill’s Pet Nutrition provided us with another year of free pet food for our adoption centres; donations from the sale of *Animal Club* pet accessories in Sainsbury’s supermarkets continued to provide valuable funds; Fort Dodge Animal Health has now been supporting us for ten years through sponsoring elements of our equine work; and superstore chain Pets at Home continues to fundraise for us.

In 2009, we featured in the BBC’s *Lifeline Appeal*, a documentary presented by Felicity Kendal, which helped to raise awareness of The Blue Cross. We also opened five new charity shops: Newbury, Warwick, Leamington Spa, Hungerford and Stow-on-the-Wold.

Our three Paw Draw raffles raised £540,000 including donations, after we introduced a Summer Paw Draw for the first time.

We are also very grateful to the many individuals, trusts and foundations that continue to support our work so generously.

▶ Former *Minder* actor Gary Webster celebrates after completing the Royal Parks Foundation Half Marathon in Hyde Park



REAL LIVES LIBBY

In 2009, Libby Orchard celebrated her tenth year of fundraising for The Blue Cross, and what a way to mark the occasion.

Her annual show, which has become a must-do in the social calendars of dog owners far and wide, raised a record £2,033.

In total, Libby has raised more than £6,000 for The Blue Cross.

She says: “I run a country pub in Wiltshire and it’s very dog friendly. A lot of our customers have rescue dogs, so that’s where the idea to hold a fundraising dog show came from.

“From small beginnings it escalated and now people come from a very wide area to take part. Some classes have more than 20 entries.

“It’s a fun show with classes such as best six legs and dog most like its owner. The show attracts people of all ages.”

£180,000
RAISED FROM
OVERSEAS TREKS



THE BLUE CROSS
Britain's pet charity



Royal Parks Foundation
Half Marathon

brakes

8545



brakes



“We are always honoured when a supporter chooses to bequeath us a legacy”

LEGACIES ARE A LONG-TERM GIFT THAT CAN COME FROM

an early memory, as one of our supporters has shared with us.

Doris Lendon’s father used to tell her about his memories of serving in World War One. Working with horses, he saw first hand the important part animals played on the frontline.

He also told her about how The Blue Cross, then known as Our Dumb Friends League, helped the animals of war.

In letters, Doris told us: “All my family are animal lovers. My father had six horses pulling machine guns in World War One and had so much sympathy for the poor creatures.

“He told us when we were older how Our Dumb Friends League tended to them on the fields of France.”

It was for that reason, Doris explained to us, that she decided to leave a gift to us in her Will.

In 2009, we were saddened to learn that Doris passed away, but pleased to be working with her family to ensure that her love of animals lives on through her legacy to The Blue Cross.

We are now arranging for a plaque to be put up at our Burford Equine Centre to commemorate her gift, which is dedicated to her parents and siblings.

Her legacy will go towards helping us to tend to needy animals now, as we did all those years ago.

Legacies continue to provide more than half our total income and in 2009, our legacy income was nearly £14 million.

We receive different types of gifts, either a specific sum of money, a valuable item or a proportion of an estate. All are extremely helpful in ensuring we can help meet the animal welfare needs of today and into the future.

Donor Development Officer Carole Bankes says: “We are always honoured when a supporter chooses to bequeath us a legacy. We offer our heartfelt thanks for those gifts received by adding the names of our benefactors to our online Book of Thanks, meaning their name lives on, as has their concern for animals through their gift.” In 2009, we added nearly 500 names to our online Book of Thanks, and have been proud to honour the last wishes of those supporters by ensuring their gift is carefully applied in continuing our work.



REAL LIVES MARGARET

Margaret Wheeldon was just a little girl during the Blitz of World War Two but she still remembered the bombings vividly. Throughout that time our dedicated team of staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to rescue animals from the rubble.

Margaret’s dog Besse Belle wore a Blue Cross tag to identify her in case she became separated from the family during an attack.

Sadly, Margaret passed away last year and, in her memory, her husband David Wheeldon has arranged to leave money to us in his Will.

He says: “Pets were not allowed in the shelters but The Blue Cross had a scheme which meant they would do all they could to rescue animals registered with them. Besse wore a Blue Cross tag on her collar throughout the conflict which my dear wife kept among her effects.”

£14M
IN LEGACIES
PROVIDING MORE
THAN 50%
OF INCOME

▶ Shetland pony Archie with his pal Sam-I-Am at Burford Equine Centre





“He was my world. Nothing touched me like this did”

“I AM SO SORRY TO BOTHER YOU BUT I DON’T KNOW HOW to get through this. I cannot accept the death of my wonderful dog. I loved him so much.”

This is just one of the many messages we received last year from people struggling to cope with the loss of a much-loved pet.

There was a 23 per cent rise in calls to our Pet Bereavement Support Service (PBSS), from 4,723 in 2008 to 5,830 in 2009. The service also responded to 604 emails from pet owners who needed support.

But feeling the loss of a pet does not always come as a result of a passing away and last year we received many phone calls from people who had to give up their pet for financial reasons.

PBSS Manager Margot Clarke says: “2009 was a particularly difficult year for many individuals and we have seen some of the effects of that, where people have been considering having to rehome their animal, which is a very traumatic decision to have to make.

“Our support service is there to help people through situations like this, to chat through some possible options, and to support the owner whatever decision they reach.”

The PBSS has 72 volunteers who give up their time to respond to calls and emails every day of the year.

Margot says: “Our volunteers do an amazing job in providing cover for the service which runs from 8.30am until 8.30pm every single day of the year.

“Without their support we just wouldn’t be able to reach out and offer the support to the many thousands who contact the service every year.”

In May our Rolleston Equine Centre opened a new memorial garden which provides a tranquil woodland setting where bereaved owners can remember their beloved pets and dedicate a plaque or tree.

Last year a further 1,081 online pet memorials were created on our website, making a total of 5,975.

5,830
CALLS TO THE PET
BEREAVEMENT
SUPPORT SERVICE



REAL LIVES MARION

When Marion’s beloved dog Oliver died she needed someone to turn to.

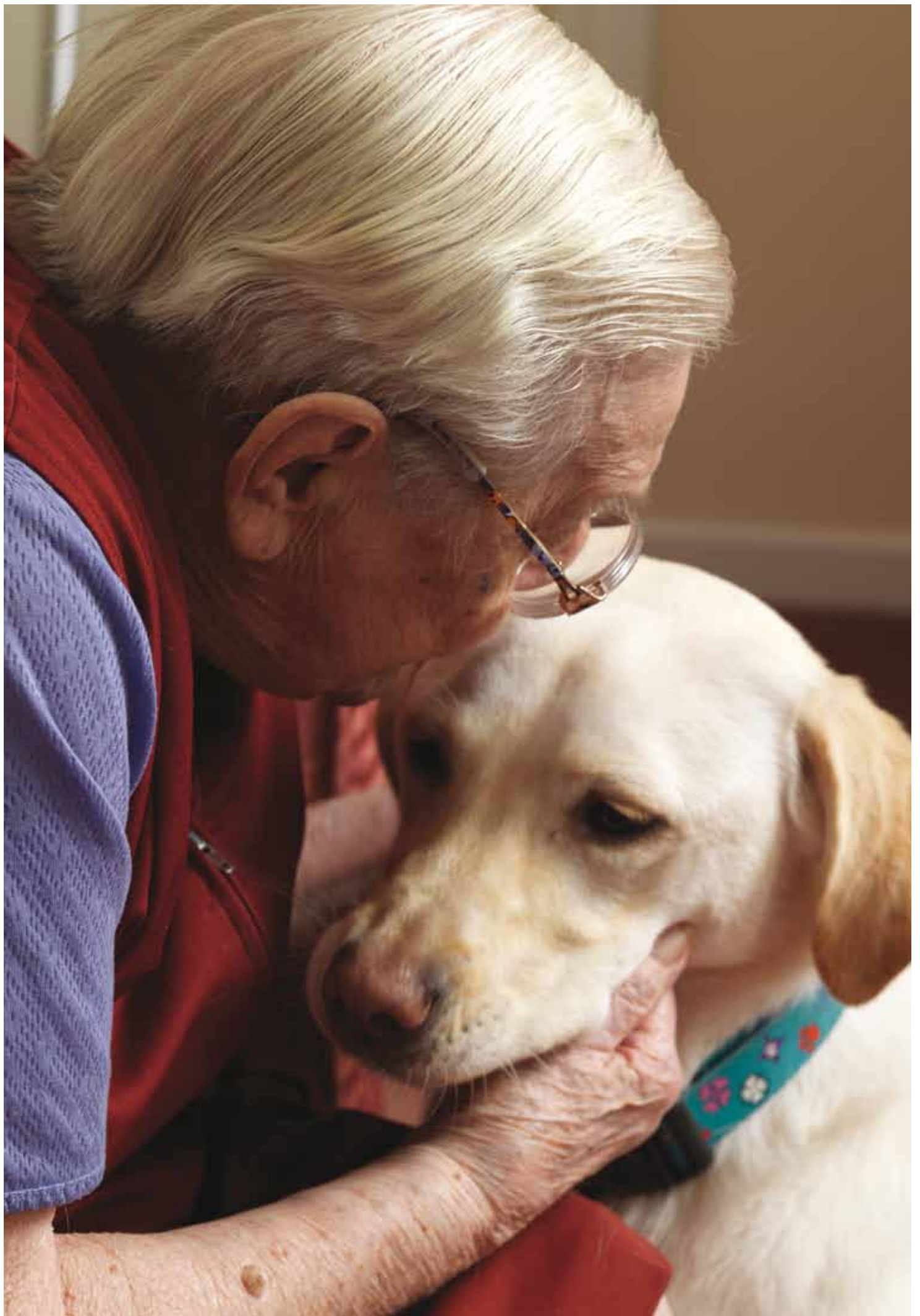
She says: “He was my world. I’d had a lot of bereavements in my life but nothing touched me like this did.

“I contacted the PBSS and they gave me support by email for around a year. I can’t stress how wonderful it was – I knew somebody was there for me and it was incredible to have that, because pet bereavement is something that isn’t often understood.”

The help that Marion received from the PBSS inspired her to become a volunteer herself and, after training, she started in January 2008.

She says: “With the current economic climate some people can’t afford to keep their pet any more. We are here to listen and help them to work through it.”

Time to say goodbye. Our Pet Bereavement Support Service received nearly 6,000 calls in 2009



All this is thanks to each and every one of our supporters

2009 INCOME

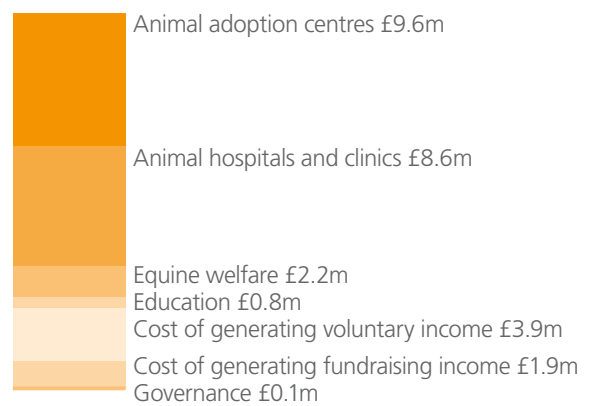
£25.4m



2009 EXPENDITURE

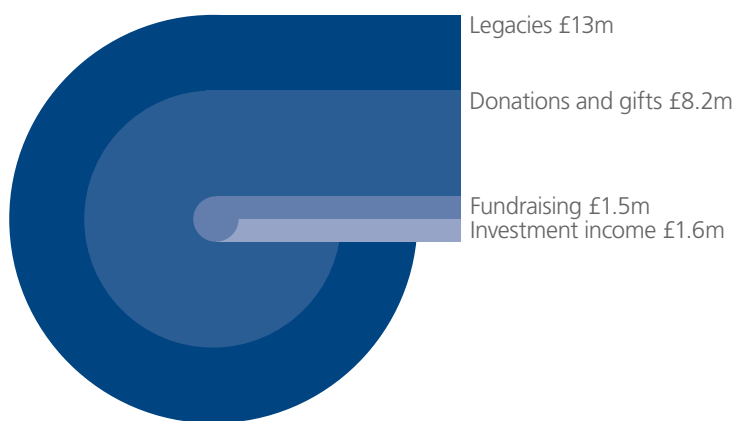
£27.1m

(Including capital expenditure)



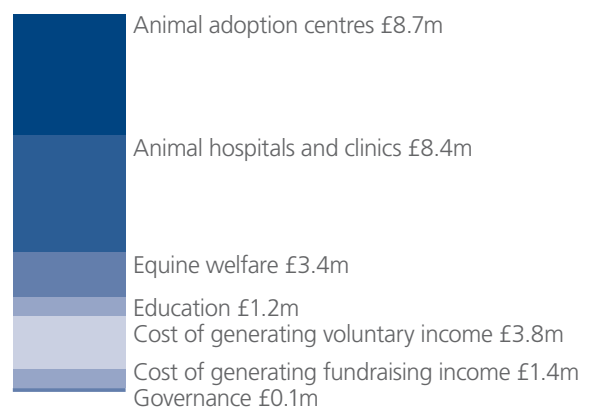
2008 INCOME

£24.3m



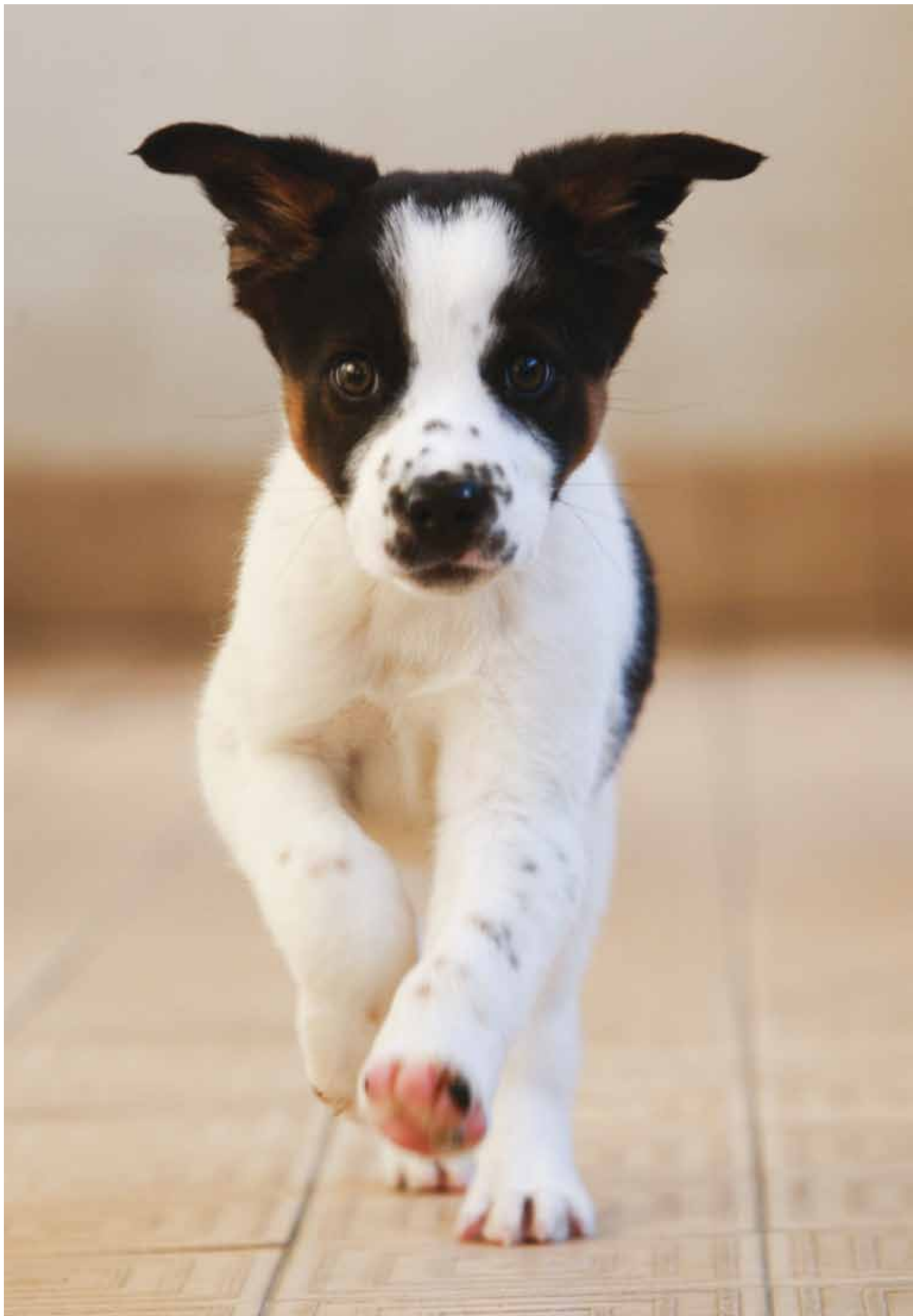
2008 EXPENDITURE

£27m



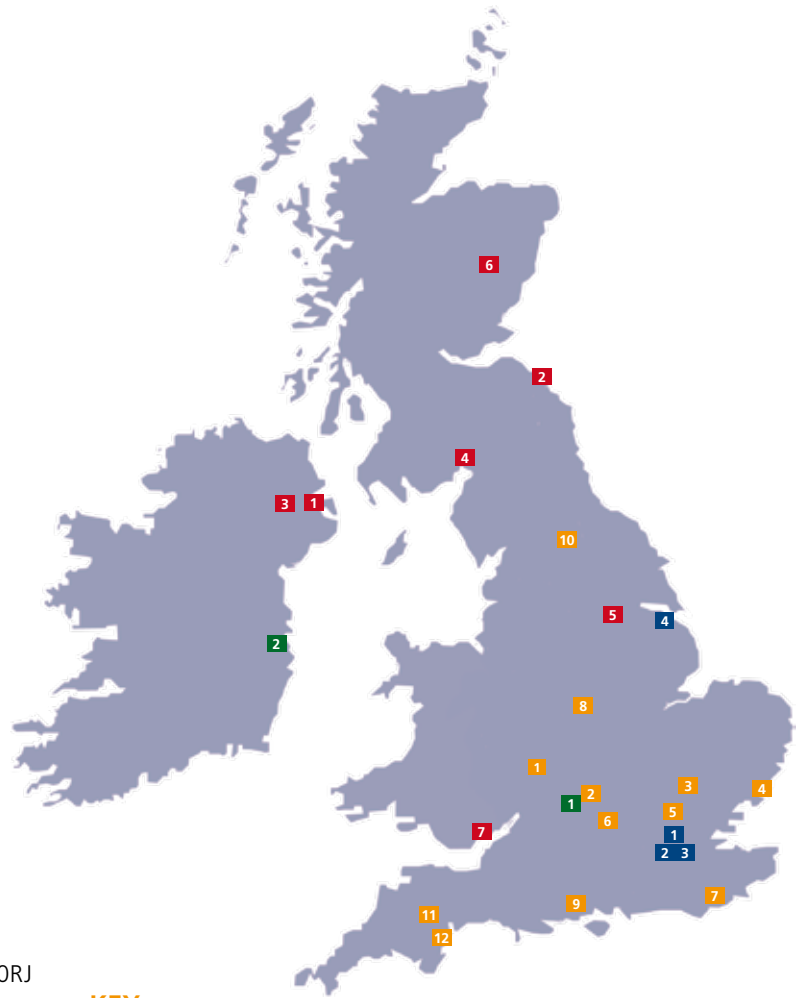
Border collie cross puppy Riley stretches his legs at Hertfordshire Adoption Centre

This financial summary is taken from the audited accounts approved by the Board of Trustees, which are due to be received and approved by the Members at the Annual General Meeting in July 2010. The full accounts will be available after this date, on request from our Director of Finance and Resources at The Blue Cross head office.



Contact us

We work closely with a number of organisations in the UK and abroad on our core aims of promoting animal welfare and responsible pet ownership.



THE BLUE CROSS HEAD OFFICE

Shilton Road, Burford,
Oxon OX18 4PF
T: 01993 822651
F: 01993 823083
E: info@bluecross.org.uk
www.bluecross.org.uk

THE BLUE CROSS ANIMAL HOSPITALS

1 The Blue Cross Animal Hospital, Victoria

Sheppard House,
1-5 Hugh Street, Victoria,
London SW1V 1QQ
T: 020 7932 2370
F: 020 7821 2371

2 The Blue Cross Animal Hospital, Hammersmith

Argyle Place, King Street,
Hammersmith,
London W6 0RQ
T: 020 8748 5150
F: 020 8237 1430

3 The Blue Cross Animal Hospital, Merton

88-92 Merton High Street,
London SW19 1BD
T: 020 8254 1400
F: 020 8254 1401

4 The Blue Cross Animal Hospital, Grimsby

Coco Markus House,
Nelson Street, Grimsby,
North East Lincs DN32 7SH
T: 01472 343278
F: 01472 269770

THE BLUE CROSS ADOPTION AND EQUINE CENTRES

1 Bromsgrove Adoption Centre
Wildmoor Lane, Catshill,
Bromsgrove, Worcs B61 0RJ
T: 0121 453 3130
F: 0121 457 6859
E: bromsgrove@bluecross.org.uk

2 Burford Adoption and Equine Centres

Shilton Road, Burford,
Oxon OX18 4PF
T: 01993 822483
(Adoption Centre)
F: 01993 822858
E: burford@bluecross.org.uk
T: 01993 822454
(Equine Centre)
F: 01993 825521
E: burfordequine@bluecross.org.uk

3 Cambridge Adoption Centre

20 Garlic Row, Newmarket
Road, Cambridge CB5 8HW
T: 01223 350153
F: 01223 324137
E: cambridge@bluecross.org.uk

4 Felixstowe Adoption Centre

333 High Street, Walton,
Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9QL
T: 01394 283254
F: 01394 672271
E: felixstowe@bluecross.org.uk

KEY

- Blue Cross animal hospitals
- Blue Cross adoption centres
- Associates
- Connected charities

5 Hertfordshire Adoption Centre

Kimpton Bottom, Nr Hitchin,
Herts SG4 8EU
T: 01438 832232
F: 01438 833645
E: kimpton@bluecross.org.uk

6 Lewknor Adoption Centre

London Road (A40),
Lewknor, Oxon OX49 5RY
T: 01844 355293
F: 01844 355741
E: lewknor@bluecross.org.uk

7 Northiam Small Animal Adoption Centre and Equine Centre for Rest and Retirement

St Francis Fields, Northiam,
East Sussex TN31 6LP
T: 01797 252243
(Adoption Centre)
F: 01797 252948
E: northiam@bluecross.org.uk

T: 01797 253908
(Equine Centre)
E: northiamequine@bluecross.org.uk

8 Rolleston Equine Centre

Hilda Archer Sanctuary,
Newlands Farm, Dovecliff
Road, Rolleston-on-Dove,
Staffs DE13 9AU
T: 0845 260 5505
E: rolleston@bluecross.org.uk

9 Southampton Adoption Centre

Bubb Lane, West End,
Southampton,
Hants SO30 2HL
T: 023 8069 2894
F: 023 8069 5477
E: southampton@bluecross.org.uk

10 Thirsk Adoption Centre
Parklands, Station Road,
Topcliffe, Thirsk,
North Yorks YO7 3SE
T: 01845 577759
F: 01845 578596
E: thirsk@bluecross.org.uk

11 Tiverton Adoption Centre
Chilton Gate, Bickleigh,
Tiverton, Devon EX16 8RS
T: 01884 855291
F: 01884 855705
E: tiverton@bluecross.org.uk

12 Torbay Adoption Centre
Ashley Priors Lane,
Watcombe, Torquay,
Devon TQ1 4SE
T: 01803 327728
F: 01803 323314
E: torbay@bluecross.org.uk

OTHER BLUE CROSS CONTACTS
Communications and Fundraising Office
7 Hugh Street,
London SW1V 1QG
T: 020 7932 4060
F: 020 7932 4061
E: press@bluecross.org.uk

Pet Bereavement Support Service
The Blue Cross,
Shilton Road, Burford,
Oxon OX18 4PF
T: 01993 825539
(general enquiries)
PBSS Support Line:
T: 0800 096 6606 (UK only)
8.30am-8.30pm
E: pbssmail@bluecross.org.uk

Rehoming Pet Fostering
The Blue Cross,
Shilton Road, Burford,
Oxon OX18 4PF
T: 01993 825542
E: fostering@bluecross.org.uk

ASSOCIATES

1 Assisi Animal Sanctuary
1 Old Bangor Road, Conlig,
Newtownards BT23 7PU
Northern Ireland
T: 028 9181 2622
www.assisi.dnet.co.uk

2 Berwick Animal Rescue Kennels (BARK)
Windmill Way East,
Ramparts Business Park,
Berwick upon Tweed,
Northumberland TD15 1TQ
T: 01289 306299
www.b-a-r-k.co.uk

3 Crosskennan Lane Animal Sanctuary
Crosskennan Lane,
Ballynoe, Antrim,
County Antrim BT41 2QY
Northern Ireland
T: 028 9446 5384
www.crosskennanlane.org.uk

4 Dumfries & Galloway Canine Rescue Centre
Dovecotewell,
By Glencaple, Dumfries
DG1 4RH, Scotland
T: 01387 770210
www.caninerescue.co.uk

Gozo SPCA Rescue and Rehoming Centre
By The Playing Field,
Main Gate Street,
Victoria VCT 1341,
Gozo, Malta
T: +356 2155 3769
E: info@spca-gozo.org

Les Amis Des Chats
A La Mairie, Le Bourg,
82150 Roquecor, France
T: +33 5 6395 2810
www.les-amis-des-chats.com

5 Mayflower Sanctuary
Narrow Lane, Bawtry,
Doncaster DN10 6QJ
T: 01302 711330
www.mayflowersanctuary.com

6 Mountains Animal Sanctuary
Milton of Ogil, Glenogil,
Forfar, Angus DD8 3SQ,
Scotland
T: 01356 650258
www.mountainsanimal
sanctuary.org.uk

L' Association Phoenix
Les Fauges, 24380
Vergt, France
T: +33 5 5354 9481
www.phoenixasso.com

7 Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies
Coxstone, St Maughan's,
Monmouth NP25 3QF,
Wales
T: 01600 750233
www.swhp.co.uk

CONNECTED CHARITIES

Pet Fostering Service Scotland
T: 0131 449 4393
E: info@pfss.org.uk
www.pfss.org.uk

1 Society for Companion Animal Studies (SCAS)
The Blue Cross, Shilton Road,
Burford, Oxon OX18 4PF
T: 01993 825597
www.scas.org.uk

2 The Irish Blue Cross
Unit 15A, Goldenbridge,
Industrial Estate,
Tyrconnell Road, Inchicore,
Dublin 8, Ireland
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F: +353 1 416 3035
www.bluecross.ie

THE BLUE CROSS SHOPS

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Droitwich Blue Cross Shop
15 St Andrews Street,
Droitwich Spa,
Worcestershire WR9 8DY
T: 01905 795316

Dursley Blue Cross Shop
25-27 Parsonage Street,
Dursley, Gloucestershire
GL11 4BW
T: 01453 548646

Fleet Blue Cross Shop
187 Fleet Road, Fleet,
Hampshire GU51 3BL
T: 01252 627133

Hereford Blue Cross Shop
7 St Peter's Street,
Hereford HR1 2LE
T: 01432 278168

Stow-on-the-Wold Blue Cross Shop (opened 2009)
2 Church Street,
Stow-on-the-Wold,
Gloucestershire GL54 1BE
T: 01451 831717

Stroud Blue Cross Shop
62 High Street, Stroud,
Gloucestershire GL5 1AS
T: 01453 757713

Summertown Blue Cross Shop
276 Banbury Road,
Summertown
Oxford, Oxon OX2 7ED
T: 01865 516402

Tewkesbury Blue Cross Shop
150 High Street, Tewkesbury,
Gloucestershire GL20 5JP
T: 01684 850549

Wootton Bassett Blue Cross Shop
Unit 17, The Borough
Fields Shopping Centre,
Wootton Bassett,
Wiltshire SN4 7AX
T: 01793 854013

Hungerford Blue Cross Shop
1 High Street, Hungerford,
Berks RG17 0DN
T: 01488 684151

Leamington Spa Blue Cross Shop
47 Regent Street,
Warwickshire CV32 5EE
T: 01926 336350

Newbury Blue Cross Shop
4-6 Bartholomew Street,
Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5LL
T: 01635 580105

Warwick Blue Cross Shop
13 Swan Street, Warwick,
Warwickshire CV34 4BJ
T: 01926 495493

Worcester Blue Cross Shop
18 Mealcheapen Street,
Worcester WR1 2DQ
T: 01905 330117



We are extremely grateful to everyone who supported us in 2009

"Butch has been a wonderful addition to our family. Hopefully we will have him for many years to come. Thank you Blue Cross for providing such a superb addition to our family!"

JON FREWIN, ADOPTER

"I started volunteering for The Blue Cross after I retired. I've got the whole family involved in fundraising now and as well as volunteering at Grimsby Animal Hospital once a week, I help at all the fundraising events. Helping out here is wonderful. As soon as I arrive the time just flies."

VICTOR POPE, VOLUNTEER AT THE BLUE CROSS

"I am getting on really well with Poppy and so far she hasn't put a foot wrong! Thank you so much for this wonderful opportunity for me to have such an amazing pony! You should be proud of her."

EMILY HAWKINS, EQUINE BORROWER

"Smudge has been as good as gold so far and seems to be settling in happily. Thanks to all of you for your help, advice and support – you've all done such a good job with him."

SHEILA TUCKWELL, ADOPTER

"Taking part in the Borneo trek was extremely tough but also incredibly rewarding. It was great to raise money for The Blue Cross and I look forward to my next adventure."

JACQUI FINCHAM, FUNDRAISER



Contributing photographers Nick Ridley, Susannah Ireland, Carl Court, Steve Bardens, Rebecca Harley, Richard Rayner, Frantzesco Kangaris, Indusfoto Limited, North News & Pictures, BBC

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Management Ltd
London W1S 2UD

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Our Dumb Friends League)
Shilton Road
Burford
Oxfordshire OX18 4PF

THE BLUE CROSS (incorporating Our Dumb Friends League) is a company limited by guarantee (registered in England No. 363197) which has its registered office at Shilton Road, Burford, Oxfordshire OX18 4PF. Registered as a charity in England and Wales (224392) and in Scotland (SC040154).





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