

### Editor's letter

Welcome to the latest issue of the Reading with Oxon Border Branch newsletter. With so much happening at both the local and national level this issue is packed with details of national campaigns, local fundraising events, welcomes and farewells to members of the local RSPCA team as well as exciting news about plans for 2010!

The main message behind many of these stories is to ask all of our supporters and volunteers to GET INVOLVED. Whether this is by giving up a few hours of your time to collect for the Branch, or contacting your local MP about an animal welfare issue, whatever contribution you can make, it will make a difference!

We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and welcome your ideas for future news stories and features. Please email [volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk) with any suggestions.

Natasha Staley, newsletter editor

### Fundraising

RSPCA Week – April 27<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> May was RSPCA Week and branch volunteers collected outside Tesco in Henley and Tesco Extra in Reading. We raised a total of £1256.84 in Henley & £1296.58 in Reading – the highest amount raised during RSPCA Week so far! Thanks to everyone who helped to raise funds; all of which will go to helping animals in the local area.

Henley collection day – The Branch recently held a collection day in Henley on August 8<sup>th</sup> and raised £354.09.

Reading collection day – We will be holding another collection day in Reading town centre on 5<sup>th</sup> September. Please email [volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk) if you are able to volunteer for this event or other fundraising activities.

### Dogs in danger from hot cars

Earlier this summer news broke that two police dogs died after being left in a car outside Nottingham Police Headquarters on one of the hottest days of the year.

This tragic incident serves as a timely reminder that dogs should not be left in cars, caravans or conservatories on warm days. Even when it is just 22°C (72°F) outside, the temperature in a car can soar to 47°C (117°F) within 60 minutes. Open windows or a water bowl make little difference. This can lead to heatstroke which can potentially be fatal.

Although all dogs will suffer, some are more prone to heatstroke. For example, dogs that are old, young, short-nosed, long-haired, overweight or heavily muscled are more at risk, as well as dogs with certain diseases.

#### Top tips to keep dogs cool

1. Your dog should always have access to water and be able to move into a cooler, ventilated environment.
2. Never leave your dog alone in a car. If you want to take your dog with you on a car journey, make sure that your destination is dog-friendly.
3. Never leave your dog in a glass conservatory or a caravan.
4. Dogs can get sunburned too. Ask your vet for advice on pet-safe sunscreens.

### Racing to protect greyhounds

Every year at least 10,000 greyhounds are retired from racing. The fate of many of these greyhounds is unknown and huge numbers simply 'disappear'.

The RSPCA believes that the health and happiness of thousands of racing

greyhounds is very poor. Welfare issues can occur at any life stage, so all aspects of the greyhound industry, from breeding to kennelling, racing, transportation, management and final retirement need to be improved. We want to see greyhounds protected from cradle to grave.

The government recently gave the public the opportunity to respond to its consultation on the welfare of racing greyhounds in England. The results of the consultation are expected within the next three months.



### End circus shame

The RSPCA is opposed to the use of animals in circuses. As part of the Animal Welfare Act, new regulations on the use of animals in circuses will be considered later this year. The government in England has committed to introduce a ban on the use of certain non-domesticated (wild) species in travelling circuses.

The ban is much-needed, as illustrated by the news earlier this year that three more elephants have joined the Great British Circus from Germany.

The RSPCA believes the circus is no place for an animal. The life of a circus animal consists of frequent travel, restricted movements, poor living conditions and loud noises.



What you can do to help

If you want to help to end the suffering of circus animals, here is what you can do:

Boycott any circus featuring animals.

Email your MP – you can use the search tool on the RSPCA website ([www.rspca.org.uk](http://www.rspca.org.uk), under campaigns/circuses) to find your MP.

Visit [www.giveanimalsavoice.org.uk/blog/circus](http://www.giveanimalsavoice.org.uk/blog/circus) to add your comments to the debate.

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## Dog neutering & micro-chipping scheme

The Branch will soon be launching a neutering and micro-chipping scheme for bull-breeds and 'status dogs'. The introduction of the scheme was prompted by recent figures that show two-thirds of all dog fighting reports received by the RSPCA are now directly connected to youths using their dogs as weapons in streets and parks.

The figures tie in with the increasing trend amongst teenagers and young males of using stereotypically macho-type dogs, such as bull-breeds, as weapons of intimidation in urban areas of England and Wales.

Under the scheme, inspectors who are called out to visit these breeds will offer their owners a voucher for FREE neutering and micro-chipping. The aim of the scheme is to reduce the number of unwanted dogs and to encourage owners

to ensure that they are well cared for. Look out for further details of the scheme!

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## New RSPCA Inspectors

Please join us in welcoming two new RSPCA Inspectors to the Reading branch area - Sandy and Sue. Their primary responsibilities include investigating cruelty complaints, giving help and advice on animal care, carrying out rescues, inspecting animal establishments and bringing perpetrators of cruelty to court.

Some of you may have met the previous RSPCA Inspector for our area, another Sue. We would like to thank Sue for her hard work and dedication to the welfare of local animals and wish her all the best for the future.

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## 2009 calendar competition

Once again, the Branch will be running a calendar competition open to anyone who adopted an animal in 2009.

Last year the calendar featured photos of a selection of the animals who found loving new homes during the year and we would like to do the same for 2009. Details of how to enter will be sent soon.

In addition, the Branch is also looking for potential sponsors and retail outlets which may be able to support the calendar. If you have any suggestions please contact [volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk).

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## Guinea Pig birth care

Gem and Krystal arrived at Reading Guinea Pig Rescue very pregnant and littered down four days later.

Usually guinea pig births are uncomplicated but between them Krystal and Gem had 6 pups, 3 born dead including one breech birth. After the birth of the stillborn pups, Gem was rushed to the vet for treatment and because another dead pup was still inside her. The pup was born during the journey. Gem received antibiotics, Oxytocin

and fluids. Thank you to Sally Ward and everyone at Active Vetcare for their care and expertise.

The three remaining pups were raised by both sows and we still have no idea who the mother of whom is! Molly has since gone to a lovely home and settled in well.



This illustrates that caring for a pregnant guinea pig means doing your research – if the birth is difficult, it is important to know when to help and when to allow the sow to manage the birth.

For further information please see [www.readingguineapigrescue.co.uk](http://www.readingguineapigrescue.co.uk) or email [karen@readingguineapigrescue.co.uk](mailto:karen@readingguineapigrescue.co.uk).

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## Useful contact information

Cat rehoming/fostering:  
Jane Griffiths - 0118 901 0701

Dog rehoming/fostering: Lindsay Mills - 07853 892884

Guinea pig rehoming:  
[www.readingguineapigrescue.co.uk](http://www.readingguineapigrescue.co.uk)  
[Karen@readingguineapigrescue.co.uk](mailto:Karen@readingguineapigrescue.co.uk)

Rabbit rehoming:  
[www.readingrabbits.org.uk](http://www.readingrabbits.org.uk)  
[reading\\_rabbits@btinternet.com](mailto:reading_rabbits@btinternet.com)

Websites:  
[www.rspca.org.uk](http://www.rspca.org.uk)  
[www.rspca-reading.org.uk](http://www.rspca-reading.org.uk)

To become a member of the Branch or to make a donation, please email [volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@rspca-reading.org.uk)

To report any act of cruelty please contact the RSPCA 24 hour Cruelty & Advice Line on 0300 1234 999. Please DO NOT call any other number to report cruelty.

The Branch would also like to thank all of its volunteers, supporters and adopters.