



EVENT PROGRAMME



TELFORD
INTERNATIONAL
CENTRE



08 - 09
MAY
2025

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A WARM WELCOME

FROM ADCH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REBECCA COOPER

A very warm welcome to all our valued delegates, speakers, sponsors, exhibitors, and supporters. Your presence at this year's sold-out conference is truly appreciated, and we are delighted to have you join us.

This year's conference holds special significance as we celebrate ADCH's 40th Anniversary - a milestone that reflects four decades of dedication to improving the lives of dogs and cats. It is an honour to be part of such a passionate and committed community, and I look forward to another fantastic event filled with learning, collaboration, and inspiration.

We have once again brought together an incredible lineup of speakers and exhibitors who will share their expertise and insights. Whether you are a returning delegate or attending for the first time, I encourage you to make the most of the opportunities for learning, networking, and collaboration throughout the conference.

On Thursday evening, we invite you to join us for the Petplan & ADCH Animal Charity Awards, where we will recognise the outstanding achievements of individuals and teams in our sector. This special evening is a wonderful reminder of the collective impact we have in transforming the lives of animals, and we look forward to celebrating together.

We are deeply grateful to our sponsors, exhibitors, volunteers, and speakers, whose generosity and commitment make this event possible. Special thanks to Petplan, Battersea, Blue Cross, Cats Protection, Dogs Trust, RSPCA, Woodgreen Pets Charity, Mars Petcare, and Royal Canin for their continued support. Please make sure to take the time to visit the exhibition stands; everyone here is eager to understand the needs of our sector. Don't forget to get your passport stamped at each stand for free entry into our prize draw. For a complete list of our sponsors and exhibitors, please refer to pages 32 and 33.

To our members, your unwavering dedication is truly commendable. Whether you work directly with animals, in fundraising, operations, administration, or any other vital role, your contributions are essential to the success of your organisations and the welfare of the animals you support. Despite the challenges faced by the sector, you continue to demonstrate exceptional commitment, compassion, and resilience. Thank you for everything you do and for supporting one another as we work together to make a difference.

As we come together for this milestone conference, marking 40 years of ADCH, let's celebrate the progress we've made while embracing the spirit of collaboration and innovation that defines our community. May the next two days inspire new ideas, strengthen partnerships, and continue the important work of improving the lives of dogs and cats—building on the legacy of the past and shaping the future.

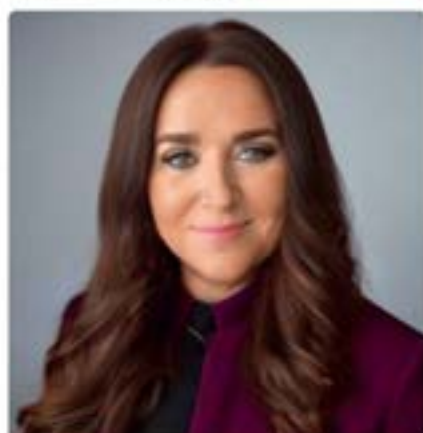
Thank you for being here. I look forward to meeting you.

Warm regards,



REBECCA COOPER (BECKY)

Executive Director
rebecca@adch.org.uk



EVENT LANYARDS

This year, we'll be using self-service registration kiosks to print your lanyard badge when you arrive. Simply scan your **personal QR code** from the confirmation email you received before the event to print your event lanyard badge. All participants are required to wear their lanyard when attending sessions and when entering the exhibition area. If you lose your lanyard, please speak to a member of the team or email us at events@adch.org.uk.

EVENT APP

New for this year, we're excited to introduce our event app, created in partnership with CrowdComms. It's the easiest way to stay informed and make the most of your time at the conference. You will be able to download the app from your phone's app store or use the website version in your phone's browser. The app is packed with helpful features, including:

- A live schedule of all sessions
- The opportunity to network and connect with fellow attendees
- Easy-to-use maps of the event layout
- Details about our sponsors and exhibitors
- A handy FAQ section for quick answers



LUNCH & REFRESHMENTS

This year, tea, coffee, lunch and refreshments have been kindly sponsored by **AVID MicroChips & PETtrac Database**. All lunch and refreshments will be served during the official breaks in Hall 3, which can be found next to the exhibition area on the ground floor.

Refreshments can also be purchased from the Costa café, which is located on the ground floor (subject to opening times determined by the venue).

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT

In partnership with our Sustainability Sponsor, **Byotrol**, we have implemented several changes this year to reduce waste and improve sustainability.

Key Changes:

- **Event Programme:** Instead of automatically printing event programmes, we will share them digitally via our event app. Printed copies will be available upon request.
- **Lunch Options:** All conference lunches will be vegetarian or vegan by default, with a meat option available upon request.
- **Reducing Food Waste:** You can opt out of lunch on either day if you do not require it.
- **Delegate Bags:** Made from 4 recycled plastic bottles, our delegate bags are 100% recycled and fully recyclable. Any unused or returned conference bags will be available for members to take for reuse in their charity shops, subject to availability. If you're interested, please visit the ADCH desk at the end of the conference to collect them.
- **Lanyards:** As always, lanyards can be returned at the end of the conference for further use.

Also, our venue Telford International Conference has a sustainability policy which they follow to ensure they reduce, reuse and recycle the waste produced during events at their venue.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

The ADCH Code of Behaviour sets out the expected conduct for all attending the conference to ensure a respectful, inclusive, and professional environment for everyone.

Please scan the QR code to read our **Code of Behaviour for Events & Conferences**.



ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

We are committed to making the event as accessible and welcoming as possible. This year, we're delighted to welcome our NeuroInclusion Partner and Supporter, EventWell, who will be providing a **SensoryCalm®** quiet room. Located in Hall 3, the space will be available throughout the event for anyone who needs a moment to take time out.

There is a lift available for moving between floors. We have also requested subtitles for all speaker videos and larger font sizes for presentations.

Telford International Centre prides itself on being an accessible venue for everyone. To view their accessibility policy, please ask a member of staff or visit their website.

If there's anything else we can do to support your access or comfort, please let a member of the ADCH team know, and we will do our best to accommodate your needs.

MOBILE PHONES

As a courtesy to speakers and other delegates, all mobile phones and electronic devices should be switched to silent mode before entering sessions.

SMOKING & VAPING

Smoking, including e-cigarettes, and vaping, is not permitted anywhere within Telford International Centre. Outdoor designated smoking areas are clearly signposted.

PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT

Photographs of the sessions, social events, and exhibition areas will be taken throughout the conference for use on the ADCH website, social media platforms and other marketing materials. If you do not wish to be photographed, please inform a member of ADCH staff or email us at events@adch.org.uk.

SECURITY & SAFETY

Bags, luggage and other personal items can be stored in the cloakroom on the ground floor. The cloakroom is unsupervised, so any items will be left at your own risk. Please do not leave bags or other personal items unattended in any of the session halls.

RAFFLE

Raffle tickets will be available to purchase until 12:00 on Friday 09 May. You can buy tickets from a member of the ADCH team using card or contactless payment via your phone. The raffle will be drawn during lunch in Hall 3. You must be present to claim your prize.

SPONSOR PASSPORT

Engage with our sponsors in the Exhibition Area and complete your Sponsor Passport for the chance to win a ticket to the ADCH Conference 2026.

Once you've collected a stamp from each sponsor, fill in your details on the back and post your completed Passport in the box at the ADCH desk by 12:00 on Friday 09 May. Winners will be drawn at random and announced during lunch in Hall 3. You must be present to claim your prize.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

You can view our full FAQs on the ADCH website by scanning the QR code below, or feel free to contact us.



CONTACT US

For any issues, changes or urgent matters during the event, please see a member of the event team or email events@adch.org.uk.

OUR TRUSTEES

ADCH is overseen by a Board of Trustees, all of whom generously volunteer their time, expertise, and support. The team would like to express their sincere gratitude for their significant contribution to the success of this conference.

MEET THE ADCH TEAM



GILES WEBBER
Chair



CAROLINE JOHNSON
Vice Chair & Member
Engagement Committee
Chair



MIKE WEBB
Honorary Secretary



YVONNE GODDARD
Honorary Treasurer



DAVID BOWLES
Legislative
Committee Chair



MIKE ELLIOT
Governance
Committee Chair



PETER HEPBURN
Standards & Animal
Welfare Committee
Chair



ADAM CLOWES
Trustee



CHARLOTTE FIELDER
Trustee



CHRIS BRAY
Trustee



LINDA CANTLE
Trustee



MARINA FIDDLER
Trustee



NICOLA WHITE
Trustee

OUR CENTRAL TEAM

ADCH has five full-time staff members who make up our central team. If you need any assistance during the event, feel free to reach out to a member of the team, who will be on hand to offer their support and assistance.



REBECCA COOPER
Executive Director



THÉRÈSE CARR
Membership Services Manager



CLARE RADLETT
Standards & Operations
Officer



ELLIE ROCHE
Membership Services Coordinator



MICHELLE WIDGER
Volunteer Manager

SCAN TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT
THE TEAM





165
ADCH
MEMBERS



115,000
DOGS AND CATS
CARED FOR BY OUR MEMBERS

550+
ATTENDED THE ADCH
CONFERENCE 2024

53,000
PEOPLE
work or volunteer
in our member
organisations



99%
of our members would
RECOMMEND
us to other organisations



4.5 MEMBER
SATISFACTION RATING
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

60 ADCH
REGISTERED
VOLUNTEERS
ready to help



6,600
FOLLOWERS
across our social
media platforms



750
attended our
online events

1900 MEMBERS
AND SUPPORTERS
subscribed to our
newsletters and
special bulletins



46 
ASSESSMENTS
carried out across
56 sites by ADCH
volunteer assessors

200
MEMBER
BENEFITS

THURSDAY 08 MAY

DAY ONE OVERVIEW

STREAMS SUPPORTED BY

RSPCA.



	MANAGEMENT STREAM	DOG STREAM	CAT STREAM	COMMUNITY & FUNDRAISING	FRINGE EVENTS
	IRONBRIDGE	WENLOCK	BECKBURY	COALPORT	PATTINGHAM
09:00 - 09:45 45 mins	REGISTRATION				
09:45 - 10:10 25 mins	Opening address				
10:10 - 10:50 40 mins	Working together to change lives, two at a time!				
10:50 - 11:10 20 mins	BREAK - VISIT OUR SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS				
11:20 - 12:10 50 mins	Regional catch-ups				
12:20 - 13:00 40 mins	Ownership issues for rescues	The impact of veterinary medicines on the environment, with a focus on neonicotinoids and Fipronil	Setting up fosterers for success	Fundraising on a budget	
13:00 - 14:00 60 mins	LUNCH & NETWORKING - VISIT OUR SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS				No space for rabbits? Understanding public perception of pet rabbit ownership and accommodation requirements
14:00 - 14:40 40 mins	How to achieve good biosecurity on site	Dogs, people and society have changed: understanding the challenges in the animal welfare sector	End of life decision making - an integral part of your welfare toolkit for cats	Opening your first charity shop	
14:50 - 15:30 40 mins	Pets and wellbeing: Exploring the science of human-animal interactions	Canine health and welfare research - what gets studied, what should change?	Homes beyond houses: Redefining the perfect home		Creating and understanding effective partnerships
15:30 - 16:00 30 mins	NETWORKING BREAK				
16:10 - 16:50 40 mins	Effective advocacy for rescues	American XL Bullies: Managing typing, exemptions, and the next generation	Managing displacement behaviour in cats	Promoting better lives for pets - unleashing the power of your teams to improve the welfare of pets in society	Fundraisers Forum
17:00 - 17:10 10 mins	Closing remarks				

FRIDAY 09 MAY DAY TWO OVERVIEW

STREAMS SUPPORTED BY

RSPCA.



	MANAGEMENT STREAM	DOG STREAM	CAT STREAM	COMMUNITY & FUNDRAISING	FRINGE EVENTS
	IRONBRIDGE	WENLOCK	BECKBURY	COALPORT	PATTINGHAM
09:00 - 09:30 30 mins	REGISTRATION				
09:30 - 09:40 10 mins	Opening address				
09:40 - 10:20 40 mins	Embracing 'no': Helping more pets and supporting our teams				
10:30 - 11:10 40 mins	Building a successful education programme for small-medium charities (without breaking the bank!)	Home already: Rethinking street dog welfare in Sri Lanka's communities	Be part of the journey: What is a balanced cat population in the UK? What are we striving for?	Unlocking the power of corporate partnerships in animal welfare	Assessor Workshop Invite only
11:10 - 11:40 30 mins	NETWORKING BREAK - VISIT OUR SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS				
11:50 - 12:30 40 mins	Nutrition as the 5th vital sign - considerations in a rescue environment	Community work at Mayhew	Are cats going to the dogs? The impact of cats being bred with extreme characteristics	Ten top tips for successful grants fundraising	
12:40 - 13:20 40 mins	Can managing a small charity be fun - tips on good governance for Trustees of small charities	Emotions in motion	Order of service - biosecurity on a budget	From crisis to care: Strengthening communities to prevent relinquishment and improve welfare	
13:30 - 13:50 20 mins	Closing remarks				
14:00 - 15:30 90 mins	LUNCH, NETWORKING & PRIZE DRAWS - LAST CHANCE TO VISIT OUR SPONSORS AND EXHIBITORS				
15:30	CLOSE				

DISCLAIMER

The Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH) provides a platform for various speakers during its events and in its materials. Please note that ADCH does not endorse or validate every element of the presentations or information shared by speakers. The views and opinions expressed are those of the individual speakers and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of ADCH. Attendees are encouraged to use their discretion and critical judgment when interpreting and applying the information provided.

Petplan[®]



**Petplan & ADCH
Animal Charity
Awards 2025**

Thursday 8th May

5.10pm

ADCH conference
finishes, free time

7.00pm

Drinks and Networking
Reception - Gallery

7.30pm

Petplan & ADCH
Animal Charity
Awards Dinner -
with celebrity host

**10.30pm
-12.30am**

Live music, photobooth,
card-only bar

Dress code: Party wear

Petplan & ADCH
Animal Charity
Awards 2025



Volunteer of the Year



George Deacon
British Divers Marine Life Rescue
Uckfield



Lynne Hall
K9 Focus Dog Rescue
Torrington



Terri Dixon
Cats Protection
Cambridgeshire

Employee of the Year



Bethany Stukins
Jerry Green Dog Rescue
Mansfield



Eimear Cassidy
Dogs Trust
Dublin



Susie Hughes
RSPCA
Salford

Team of the Year



Cotswolds Dogs & Cats Home
Cambridge



Give A Dog A Bone
Glasgow



Pawprints Dog Rescue
Rugby

Congratulations and good luck to all of this year's finalists!

We look forward to celebrating all the finalists and announcing the winners on Thursday 8th May from 7pm.



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live

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Petplan is underwritten by Allianz Insurance plc.

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KEYNOTE SESSION

**ADAM CLOWES**
Operations Director,
Dogs Trust**GARRY BOTTERILL CF**
Founder & Volunteer Operations Director,
Service Dogs UK**WORKING TOGETHER TO CHANGE LIVES, TWO AT A TIME!**

Working together can provide many benefits to organisations as they bring together different attributes, abilities, knowledge and resources.

We will be looking at our particular collaboration between our charities and the history of how it came about. We will explore the concerns around partnering other organisations, how these concerns feed into the decision making process, and why making a 'leap of faith' can be a change everything for some. We will look at the impact and ongoing effect of our collaboration and what that means for the wellbeing of both dogs and humans as we continue our relationship.

Lastly we will give some insight into the results of our partnership and how by working together, we are able to change two lives at a time!

WORKSHOP

REGIONAL SESSION

Join fellow delegates from your region to connect, share insights, and explore the specific challenges facing your local area. Hosted by the ADCH Member Engagement Committee, this interactive session creates space for open discussion, peer learning, and the opportunity to identify ways to work together towards practical solutions.

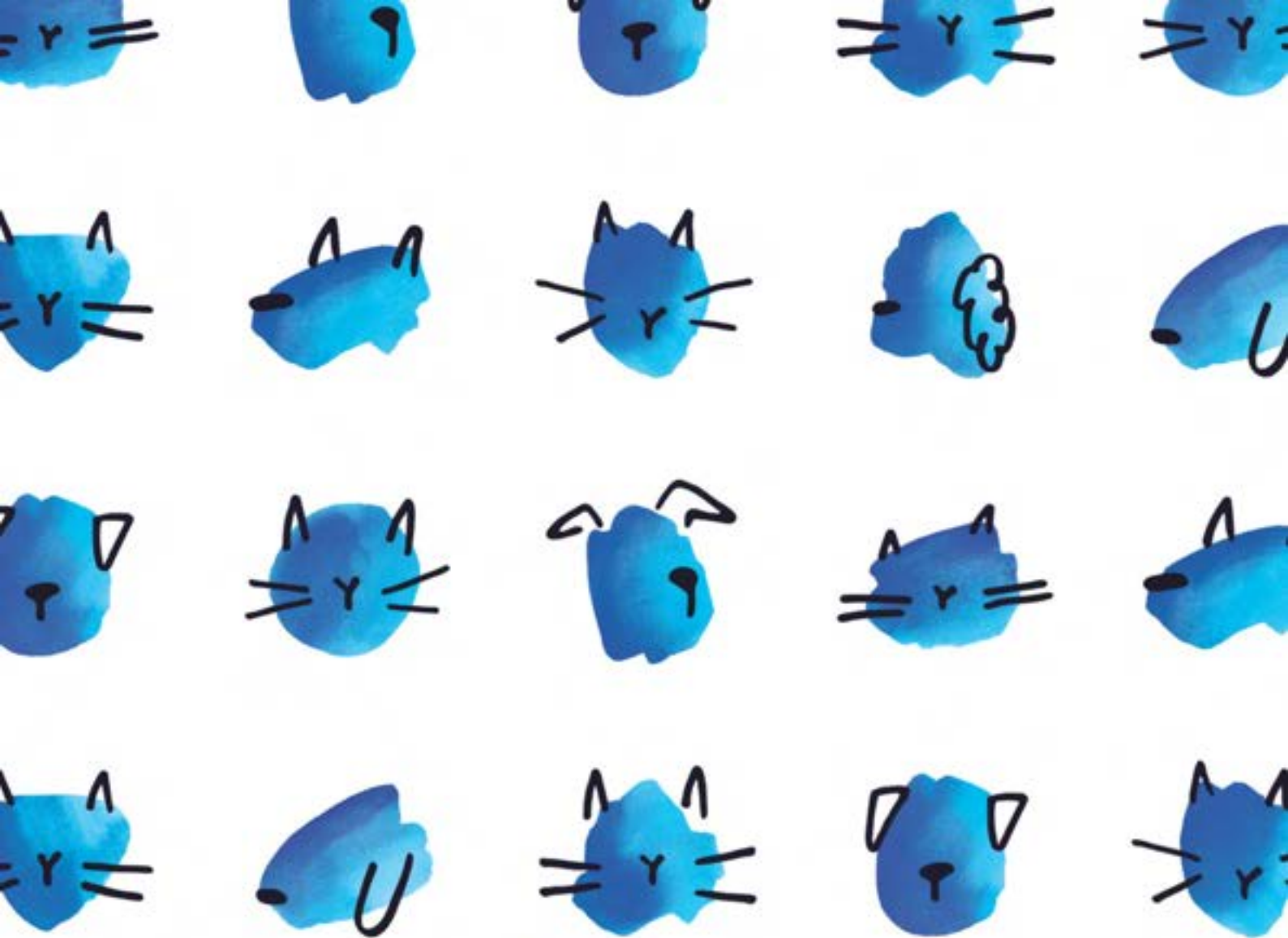
**TREVOR COOPER**
Principal,
Cooper & Co Solicitors**JACK SULLIVAN**
Solicitor,
Cooper & Co Solicitors**OWNERSHIP ISSUES FOR RESCUES**

An overview of what constitutes evidence of ownership of a dog or cat and what is the distinction between an owner and a keeper. We will look at practical scenarios to consider when ownership is transferred to the rescue and what can happen if the rescue takes possession of an animal but ownership has not transferred. Also, can a rescue get ownership back if there is a breach of conditions.

**CLAIRE BROWN**
Senior Cat Welfare Manager,
Cats Protection**PETER NORGATE**
Volunteer Branch Team Leader,
Cats Protection**SETTING UP FOSTERERS FOR SUCCESS**

Fostering animals is a rewarding yet challenging experience that requires the right preparation, resources, and support. Setting up fosterers for success will talk about how animal rescues, shelters, and foster coordinators can create a structured and supportive environment for foster caregivers.

We will be talking you through a range of topics including: selecting the right foster homes, providing training and resources, addressing common challenges, and ensuring smooth transitions for foster animals. We will also be talking about best practices for communication, emotional support, and problem-solving all of which will help your fosterers provide the best possible care.



BATTERSEA

TOGETHER, WE'RE ALL IN, FOR THEM

PREVENT

We're working to prevent the causes of poor dog and cat health and welfare, and reduce the number of dogs and cats needing rescue centres.

SUPPORT

We support the individuals and communities who need it most, so that more animals can stay in places where they're loved and cared for.

CARE

We provide expert care for those dogs and cats that still need a place in rescue, so that they can get the support they need as soon as possible.

To find out more about how Battersea collaborates with other shelters and rehoming organisations in the UK and globally, visit our stand or battersea.org.uk



DR ANDREW PRENTIS MRCVS
Visiting Fellow,
Grantham Institute, Imperial College London

THE IMPACT OF VETERINARY MEDICINES ON THE ENVIRONMENT, WITH A FOCUS ON NEONICOTINOIDS AND FIPRONIL

The natural environment across the planet is increasingly contaminated with medicines used for animals and people: these include antibiotics, hormones, antidepressants, parasite treatments, anaesthetic agents and recreational drugs. These can impact on the natural ecosystem, and as our ability to detect these chemicals improves, the extent of that impact becomes ever more apparent.

Parasite medications for pets are now widely available and often used indiscriminately, raising real concerns about their effect on wild invertebrates, biodiversity and the food chain, the development of drug resistance and the potential impact of chronic exposure on human health.

In this lecture we will look at the implications of this and some of the actions we can take to ensure that our use of medicines matches clinical need.



IZZY TUTCHER
Philanthropy Manager,
Leicester Animal Aid

FUNDRAISING ON A BUDGET

This session will celebrate the strengths of small-team fundraising while addressing the real challenges of working with limited funds.

Based on the core fundraising principles of shared goals, trusting relationships, and thoughtful supporter care, the session will help you reflect on your team, messaging, giving methods and stewardship to help you choose the best ways to make the most of your time, funds and energy. It will also include examples, budget-friendly tips, and information on further resources.

Izzy joined Leicester Animal Aid in 2016, following on from fundraising roles at Coventry, Exeter and Warwick universities and the Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation. She studied Psychology BSc at Coventry University and received her Certificate in Professional Fundraising from Boston University.



NATALIE POWDRILL-WELLS BSC (HONS), MRES
Research Officer,
Woodgreen Pets Charity

NO SPACE FOR RABBITS? – UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF PET RABBIT OWNERSHIP AND ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS

At the last ADCH conference, we asked the question “Should we compromise rehoming standards to rehome more rabbits?”. The collective response suggested we shouldn’t but ultimately raised more questions than the session answered. This year, we will share the findings from our recent study exploring public perceptions of good practice rabbit accommodation. The findings offer an insight into potential avenues towards a positive change for rabbit welfare – but also highlight the challenges that will realistically emerge from an increased awareness of rabbit needs. Ultimately, we’re left with a fundamental question to explore in this interactive workshop. Is society now a suitable place for the traditional pet rabbit?

If you’re interested in small pet welfare and discussion with your peers, this session is for you.

Making a better life for cats, because life is better with cats

cats.org.uk



Cats Protection is a registered charity (no. 296346) and a company limited by guarantee (no. 15002942). Registered office: Kings Bush Farm, London Road, Godshouse, LE20 2NR. It is listed as a Section 57 institution by the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland, 1 VET 20, 2014.



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personal entertainer?
Think daily adventures,
playtime and fun!

And maybe
the odd mucky
bathtime*



woodgreen

Dog ownership should start with
finding the right breed. Pet Explorer
helps to make the **perfect match**.

Talk to us about our new service



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LIZZIE DODGSON,
BA HONS DIP RVN
Key Account Manager,
Byotrol



DAVINA OSBORNE RVN,
DIPAVN (SURG)
Veterinary Nursing Lead,
RSPCA



VANESSA WHITFIELD
Lead Vet for Branches,
RSPCA

HOW TO ACHIEVE GOOD BIOSECURITY ON SITE

This presentation by Byotrol and the RSPCA outlines their ongoing commitment to improve biosecurity across welfare settings. It considers why we need a better understanding of Biosecurity, how it affects human and animal welfare, and how to achieve it. The core message: good biosecurity saves lives, conserves resources, and enables faster animal rehoming - achieved by using simple and effective protocols alongside the right products in the right way consistently.



HEATHER WREN
Behaviour Development Manager,
Dogs Trust



DAWN BISHOP
Rehoming Projects Delivery Manager,
Dogs Trust

DOGS, PEOPLE AND SOCIETY HAVE CHANGED: UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES IN THE ANIMAL WELFARE SECTOR

In the first half of the session, Heather Wren, Behaviour Development Manager at Dogs Trust, explores the personal journey she has taken to understand the accelerated change in dog welfare issues, including how identifying 'circles of control' builds boundaries and resilience.

In the second half, Dawn Bishop, Rehoming Project Delivery Manager, goes on to explain some of the ways in which Dogs Trust has applied this knowledge into frameworks for welfare escalation.

Key questions include:

Why are we experiencing such different and difficult times as a sector? How can we communicate with colleagues to create awareness and space for discussion? And what have we done at Dogs Trust, operationally, to respond?



VICKY HALLS
Head of Unowned Cats,
International Cat Care

END OF LIFE DECISION MAKING - AN INTEGRAL PART OF YOUR WELFARE TOOLKIT FOR CATS

End-of-life decision-making is always challenging, but the difficult decision to end a life should be made when there is a realisation of poor welfare, and euthanasia is the best available option for that individual.

We should not be anti-euthanasia; we should focus more on preventing suffering. A confident and compassionate approach to end of life decision-making requires homing organisations to have an understanding of their responsibilities to staff and to cats. This presentation focuses on how cat quality of life in the homing centre environment can be assessed and considers ways of improving welfare to minimise the need for end-of-life decision-making.



VICKIE BLACKBURN
Trustee,
Woodlands Animal Sanctuary



CHRIS COOK
Fundraising & Data Manager,
Woodlands Animal Sanctuary

OPENING YOUR FIRST CHARITY SHOP

Lessons and learnings about a small organisation opening a big charity shop!

Supporting second chances: Expert canine behaviour advice



For some dogs, the journey into a new home can be challenging – both for dogs and their new families.

Whatever the challenge, our qualified and accredited Clinical Animal Behaviourists are here to help, even with the most complex cases.

- Affordable* online behaviour consultations
- For all dogs - regardless of age, breed, background or origin
- Expert support and guidance
- Tailored behaviour and training advice
- Conducted under veterinary referral

To find out more, call us on 0303 003 6666 (Mon-Sat, 9:30am-5pm) or scan the QR code:



*Means-tested discounts are available for low-income households and those receiving benefits.

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Here to take your hand when they let go



No one should face the pain of losing a pet alone.

If you're suffering any kind of pet loss and need support, or just want to find out more, our free and confidential service is available every day of the year.



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bluecross.org.uk/pet-loss-support FREEPHONE 0800 096 6606 plsmail@bluecross.org.uk



DR JO GALE BVETMED CERTLAS MRCVS
Head of Science Advocacy,
Mars Petcare

PETS AND WELLBEING; EXPLORING THE SCIENCE OF HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTIONS

Wellbeing has become an increasingly vital priority with 45% of people across 31 countries identifying mental health as their top health concern. At the same time, global anxiety and stress levels are rising, affecting over 301 million people worldwide. A growing body of evidence shows that pets can have a positive impact on mental health. With 56% of people worldwide owning pets and a global pet population of 1 billion, understanding the bond between humans and animals has never been more important. The Pets and Wellbeing Study (PAWS) programme is set to become the world's largest, multi-year research program exploring the impact of cats and dogs on mental health and wellbeing, deepening our understanding of the mutual benefits of the human-animal bond.



SAKURA ANDERSON
Head of Operational &
Food Bank Partnerships,
RSPCA



CLARE ROWLEY
Senior Operational
Partnerships Manger,
RSPCA



ALISON FLETCHER
National Lead
Pet Food Banks,
RSPCA

CREATING AND UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Want to create powerful partnerships in your community but don't know where to start? How can you strengthen and develop the partnerships you already have? This workshop will give you the tools and knowledge to design, manage, and measure successful collaborations. We'll explore creative partnership ideas, help you understand your value, and provide practical resources to get started. You'll also have the chance to network and work with others to develop real partnership plans.



DR ALISON SKIPPER MA VET MB CERT VR MA PHD MRCVS
Veterinary & Research Advisor (current), Postdoctoral Researcher in Canine Health (previous)
The Kennel Club (current), previously Royal Veterinary College (at time of research)

CANINE HEALTH AND WELFARE RESEARCH - WHAT GETS STUDIED, WHAT SHOULD CHANGE?

To improve canine lives, we need to understand the issues that affect canine health and welfare by carrying out research that explores these problems. But which topics attract most research funding? How are these decisions made? How do we know if research is directed towards the most important issues for dogs, or whether research findings even make a difference in the real world? Could this money be better spent?

Alison is a vet and researcher who recently completed a two-year research project at the Royal Veterinary College that set out to answer such questions. Jointly funded by four charities and spanning all aspects of canine health and welfare, this ground-breaking study produced some surprising insights, which Alison will share in this project review session.

A kinder world for animals needs **all kinds.**

Adopt. Volunteer. Support.



RSPCA  **FOR EVERY KIND.**

rspca.org.uk



Charity Law and Governance Experts

With 25 years of experience, supporting the sector, we understand animal charities and the issues they face.

We know that good governance and compliance leads to more income generation and better animal welfare delivery. By helping charities to modernise their governance processes, we help trustees and senior managers embed good practice and reduce risk. With practical advice on the procedural aspects, our unique approach combines charity law with other related legal needs such as fundraising and legacies, land transactions and leases, trading companies, fostering/adoption agreements, data protection, employment law and volunteer management.

Key contacts:



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Partner and Head of Team
lisa.watson-cook@LA-law.com
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Anmol Ahluwalia
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anmol.ahluwalia@LA-law.com
Tel: 023 8082 7455

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Lester Aldridge LLP is a full-service law firm. Our legal expertise spans multiple sectors, ensuring comprehensive and innovative advice.



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Senior Operations
Development Manager,
Cats Protection



SULI WEIGHT
Senior Community
Engagement Manager,
Cats Protection



NICCY TOWNLEY
Branch Coordinator,
Cambridge,
Cats Protection



WENDY HARRIS
Branch Coordinator,
Coventry,
Cats Protection



ANGELA HULLEY
Branch Team Leader,
Wolverhampton,
Cats Protection

HOMES BEYOND HOUSES: REDEFINING THE PERFECT HOME

Creative cat homing isn't new—many organisations are already successfully homing outside the box. This session is about bringing those ideas together, encouraging peer support and shared learning as we all strive to find the best outcomes for the cats in our care.

With increasing pressure on our services, we're all looking for ways to help more cats, reduce their time in care, and still meet their individual welfare needs.

This session invites you to:

- Adopt a curious mindset
- Explore what's possible beyond the traditional definition of a "perfect home"
- Consider where flexibility, rather than fixed rules, might better serve the cats

Together, we'll explore how being open can lead to better outcomes—for cats and for the people who care for them.



DAVID BOWLES
Head of Public Affairs,
RSPCA



MIKE WEBB
Head of Policy &
Public Affairs,
Battersea



MADISON ROGERS
Associate Director of Advocacy
Campaigns & External Affairs,
Cats Protection

EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY FOR RESCUES

We will discuss the legislative landscape for ADCH members in the next year, explore opportunities for rescues to influence the political climate and show case how rescues have worked with politicians successfully and unsuccessfully. We will relaunch the ADCH political toolkit of how you can work with politicians to influence policy and raise your profile locally. It's an interactive session so come with your views and tips and examples of what has worked for you.



TREVOR COOPER
Principal,
Cooper & Co Solicitors



LAURA FOSTER MSC
Rehoming Director,
Dogs Trust



DR SAMANTHA GAINES
Head of Companion Animal
Science & Policy,
RSPCA

AMERICAN XL BULLIES: MANAGING TYPING, EXEMPTIONS, AND THE NEXT GENERATION

Eighteen months since the ban on American XL Bulldogs, the RSPCA, Dogs Trust, and Trevor Cooper, share scenarios, lessons learned, and contextualised guidance on managing potential and ambiguous AXLB handovers.

With reference to case studies, we will look at the nuances of:

- Typing with and without DLO support;
- Decision-making on litters born to parents of type; and
- How to legally manage handovers of exempted dogs not of type.

We hope the session is informative but also serves as a catalyst for other organisations to share their experiences.

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HAZEL ADAMS
Cattery Team Leader,
Battersea

MANAGING DISPLACEMENT BEHAVIOUR IN CATS

This presentation explores the interesting topic of displacement behaviour in cats—an instinctual response to stress, conflict, or frustration. We'll examine what displacement behaviour looks like when they are faced with an unresolved emotional conflict. By understanding these behaviours, cat owners and animal caregivers can better interpret their pets' actions and create a more enriching and stress-free environment to foster healthy feline behaviour.



NATALIE POWDRILL-WELLS BSC (HONS)
Research Officer,
Woodgreen Pets Charity



FIONA COOKE
Associate Director of Policy & Impact,
Woodgreen Pets Charity

PROMOTING BETTER LIVES FOR PETS – UNLEASHING THE POWER OF YOUR TEAMS TO IMPROVE THE WELFARE OF PETS IN SOCIETY

Join Team Woodgreen to explore ways to maximise your opportunities to spread positive pet welfare messaging. By promoting awareness of the care needs of common pet species, we can help current and future pet owners to have a full understanding of their needs: which in turn, can help to improve pet welfare and prevent unnecessary pet relinquishment. We'll share the findings of our Woodgreen study exploring staff and volunteer views of pre-acquisition research and care-related factors for seven pet species. We'll then discuss how these findings have led to operational changes, enabling us to increase our voice as we advocate for improved pet welfare. Want to turn up the volume on your promotion of positive pet welfare? Come and join us to find out more!



IAIN RIDDELL
Fundraising & Marketing Manager,
Newcastle Dog & Cat Shelter



HALEY MEDLOCK
Head of Income Generation,
The Cotswolds Dog and Cat Home

FUNDRAISERS FORUM

Join Iain Riddell and Haley Medlock as we reintroduce the Fundraisers Forum - an exciting space for fundraising professionals across the sector to connect, share and collaborate. In this session, we'll outline what to expect from the forum, how it will support your work and ways to get involved.

Iain will also deliver a short session exploring the role of AI in fundraising, looking at how it might shape the future of our work and the opportunities it could bring. Whether you're keen to be part of a vibrant peer network or curious about new approaches in fundraising, this session is a great place to start.

The Power of the Human-Animal Bond

Pets play an important role in supporting well-being by helping us cope with stress, improve our physical health, relieve loneliness and feelings of isolation, and provide companionship. Their presence can lead to improved mental and physical health outcomes, making them invaluable companions in our lives.

Accumulating evidence from research shows that human-animal interaction (HAI) is linked to overall better health and stress management in people across all stages in life.

Children



Research suggests pets can provide stress relief and **emotional support for children**, with pet dog interactions lowering the stress hormone cortisol.¹

College Students



Interactions with therapy dogs can serve as a **stress management tool** for university students and help boost their attention and memory.²

Adults



- Dog ownership has been associated with a **24% lower risk of death** over the long term, when compared to non-owners.³
- Adults with pets have **healthier physiologic responses to stress**, including lower baseline heart rate and blood pressure, and less cardiovascular reactivity to, and faster recovery from, mild stressors.⁴
- Due to associated increased physical activity and social support, research suggests that dog owners, especially those in single households, **have better outcomes after suffering a major cardiovascular event**, such as a heart attack or stroke.⁵

Older Adults



- Pet ownership has been shown to **slow the development or progression of hypertension** in older adults.⁶
- The American Heart Association has said that pet ownership, particularly dog ownership, may be associated with **decreased cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk**.⁷
- For older adults, a strong pet-owner bond has been associated with **lower levels of loneliness and social isolation**.⁸

References:

1. Kertes DA, Liu J, Hall NJ, Hadad NA, Wynne CDL, Bhat SS. Effect of Pet Dogs on Children's Perceived Stress and Cortisol Stress Response. *Social Development*. 2017; 26(2): 382-401. 2. Pender F, Carr AM, Gee NR, Vandagriff JL. Randomized Trial Examining Effects of Animal Assisted Intervention and Stress Related Symptoms on College Students' Learning and Study Skills. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*. 2020; (17)1909. 3. Mubanga M, Byberg L, Egenvall A, Ingelsson E, Fall T. Dog ownership and survival after a major cardiovascular event: a register-based prospective study. *Circ Cardiovasc Qual Outcomes*. 2019. 4. Allen K, Blascovich J, Mendes WB. Cardiovascular reactivity and the presence of pets, friends, and spouses: the truth about cats and dogs. *Psychosom Med*. 2002; 64(5):727-39. 5. Kramer CK, Mehmood S, Suen RS. Dog ownership and survival: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Circ Cardiovasc Qual Outcomes*. 2019. 6. Friedmann E, Thomas SA, Son H, Chapa D, McCune S. Pet's Presence and Owner's Blood Pressures during the Daily Lives of Pet Owners with Pre- to Mild Hypertension. *Anthrozoos*. 2015; 26(4):535-550. 7. Levine GN, Allen K, Braun LT, Christian HE, Friedmann E, Taubert KA, Thomas SA, Wells DL, Lange RA; American Heart Association Council on Clinical Cardiology; Council on Cardiovascular and Stroke Nursing. Pet ownership and cardiovascular risk: a scientific statement from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. 2013 Jun 11;127(23):2353-63. 8. Krause-Parello C, A., Gulick E, E. (2013). Situational factors related to loneliness and loss over time among older pet owners. *West. J. Nurs. Res.* 35:905-919. 10.1177/1019394593480567



JANE CLEMENTS
Head of Strategy -
Rehoming & Fostering,
Blue Cross



CHRIS SAMPSON
Rehoming & Fostering Training
& Development Partner,
Blue Cross



JOHN CAHILL
Rehoming Operations
Manager (Home Direct),
Blue Cross

KEYNOTE SESSION

EMBRACING 'NO': HELPING MORE PETS AND SUPPORTING OUR TEAMS

Setting boundaries in animal rescue prevents burnout, overcrowding and inadequate welfare. Over-commitment stretches our organisations and can harm staff, animals and our finite resources. Saying 'no', when necessary, ensures sustainability, allowing us to provide long-term effective support, and better welfare, for both animals and those caring for them. We'll explore the understanding of our mental and emotional states and how we can change them to support 'No' conversations. Giving you the energy to help more animals and people tomorrow.



GEMMA PRICE
Head of Prevention and Education,
Raystede

BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR SMALL-MEDIUM CHARITIES (WITHOUT BREAKING THE BANK!)

Prevention is always better than cure, and education is a powerful tool in achieving lasting improvement for animals. Join us for an inspiring session led by someone with 15 years of experience building a successful local education programme. Discover how Raystede has championed proactive welfare through engaging initiatives, proving that impactful education doesn't require a huge budget. Learn from their journey – the triumphs and the lessons learned – and gain the motivation and practical insights to start or enhance your own education mission within your organisation.



SAMANTHA GREEN BEM
CEO / Founder,
Dogstar Foundation



MARK GREEN
Deputy CEO,
Dogstar Foundation

HOME ALREADY: RETHINKING STREET DOG WELFARE IN SRI LANKA'S COMMUNITIES

In Sri Lanka, free-roaming dogs are a common sight and an integral part of many communities. However, they are often mislabelled as 'strays' in need of rescue, a characterisation that does not reflect local realities or welfare outcomes. This session explores global perspectives on free-roaming and community dogs, the challenges they face, and why ownership is not always synonymous with better welfare. It examines why Dogstar advocates for CNVR (Catch, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return) as the most effective, humane, and sustainable approach in contexts where large-scale adoption is not viable. Delegates will be invited to consider a proactive model that prioritises prevention, long-term welfare, and community engagement, offering an alternative to downstream, shelter-based interventions more common in higher-income countries with established adoption cultures.



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DR JENNI MCDONALD BSC MSC PHD
Feline Epidemiologist,
Cats Protection

BE PART OF THE JOURNEY: WHAT IS A BALANCED CAT POPULATION IN THE UK? WHAT ARE WE STRIVING FOR?

There is no simple, overarching solution to effective cat population management nor indeed is there an ideal number of cats. Instead we need to consider balance in terms of cat welfare outcomes. What we are striving for needs to consider the localised situation and the unique populations of cats and other animals, including humans, domestic animals and wildlife in that environment.

Using evidence and key stakeholder input we are on a journey to unpick this complex issue, from tackling and preventing future overpopulation, to taking a step back to think about what our ultimate outcome is for cats. This session will update on our current work and also opportunities to learn from you too. Simply bring your phone to join in!



MARY HAISMAN
Head of Corporate Partnerships,
Community & Events
Blue Cross



OLEE BASS
Corporate Partnerships Officer,
Blue Cross

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS IN ANIMAL WELFARE

Corporate partnerships offer more than just funding—they can drive real change for animal welfare charities. But to unlock their full potential, collaboration across teams is key. In this session, we'll explore the evolving corporate landscape and how different areas of your charity—from operations to frontline services—can work more closely with corporate fundraisers to maximise opportunities. We'll share insights on how to align your charity's needs with business priorities, build stronger cross-team collaboration, and create partnerships that benefit both pets and people. Whether you're new to corporate fundraising or looking to strengthen internal collaboration, this session will provide practical strategies to help you make the most of corporate support.

WORKSHOP

ASSESSOR WORKSHOP

Please be aware that only ADCH Volunteer Assessors are invited to attend this workshop.



ERICA MOORHOUSE
BSC (HONS) VNPA RVN
Scientific Communications Manager,
Royal Canin



TOM LEIGHFIELD
Area Business Manager,
Royal Canin

NUTRITION AS THE 5TH VITAL SIGN - CONSIDERATIONS IN A RESCUE ENVIRONMENT

In this session, we will recap on some key nutrition principles for cats and dogs, and crucially how the two species differ from each other, and indeed us humans!

We will look at specific considerations and challenges for those animals living in a rescue environment and how we can support these animals through targeted nutrition. There can be a lot of misinformation that circulates around nutrition so we're also here to bust a few myths! Come and listen if you're curious to learn more about how you can support the animals under your care through providing tailored nutrition.

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TANIA JUDD
TheraPaws & Pet Refuge Manager,
Mayhew



KAT BERGMAN
Community Animal Support Manager,
Mayhew

COMMUNITY WORK AT MAYHEW

In our discussion we will be talking about our community outreach projects at Mayhew. This will include TheraPaws, Pet Refuge, Pet Support Hubs, and our visits out in the community supporting individuals facing homelessness and financial challenges accessing preventative vet care. Additionally, we work in partnership with 8 traveller sites providing welfare support, and facilitate collect and care for vulnerable individuals in the community also offering care packages. We will be presenting case studies around our work.



JEFF KNOTT
Advocacy &
Influence Director,
Cats Protection



CLAIRE ROBERTS
Postdoctoral feline
welfare researcher,
Cats Protection



MADISON ROGERS
Associate Director of Advocacy
Campaigns & External Affairs,
Cats Protection

ARE CATS GOING TO THE DOGS? THE IMPACT OF CATS BEING BRED WITH EXTREME CHARACTERISTICS

Evidence including Cats Protection's CATS Report shows an increasing number of cat owners are purchasing purebreds, with pedigrees outnumbering moggies for the first time in 2024. Increases in new 'designer breeds' with extreme characteristics, such as folded ears and flattened faces, is a particularly concerning emerging trend in the cat market. In this session, we introduce a new review that refocuses the discussion away from a negative focus on specific breeds towards an evidence-based assessment of the impact of specific traits, including extreme characteristics, on cat welfare. We consider the response necessary from the animal welfare sector, to ensure cat welfare remains at the heart of the changing face of cat ownership in the UK.



MITALI SEN
Senior Grants & Programmes Manager,
Battersea

TEN TOP TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL GRANTS FUNDRAISING

Charitable foundations give out in the region £6.5 billion in grants each year in the UK, which accounts for 15% of income in the voluntary sector. This makes grants an important but competitive revenue stream which means that applications need to be strong to stand out from the crowd. This session will cover common pitfalls of grant proposals with examples from within and beyond animal welfare, as well as ten top tips to improve your chances of success. It will include how to research, prioritise and steward grant-makers to help guide and build your confidence in this type of fundraising.

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PETER HEPBURN
Trustee,
ADCH

CAN MANAGING A SMALL CHARITY BE FUN - TIPS ON GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR TRUSTEES OF SMALL CHARITIES

This session will explore:

- Helping Trustees to love the regulators, or at least understand why they give us 'Guidance'.
- Looking at the challenges affecting Trustees of small (and other sized) charities.
- Peter's Top Tips.
- Using the wisdom of the room to answer your governance questions.



TOM CANDY
Senior Training and Behaviour Advisor,
Dogs Trust

EMOTIONS IN MOTION

Emotions are physical and mental states brought on by changes in the environment. Emotions, both positive and negative are essential considerations for supporting the animals in our care. This session will look at emotions in motion, understanding what emotions our dogs maybe exposed to and, through the use of two case studies, look at how we can support differencing emotional needs to improve welfare and emotional health.



SUSIE HUGHES
Branch Manager,
RSPCA Manchester and Salford Branch

ORDER OF SERVICE - BIOSECURITY ON A BUDGET

Prolonged stress weakens an animal's immune system, making cats in rescue care more vulnerable to illness. Over the past seven years, RSPCA Manchester and Salford Branch has trialled a range of stress-reducing techniques to improve feline welfare and reduce the spread of infectious disease. This session will share practical, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly solutions that any rescue—regardless of size or resources—can implement. Expect tried-and-tested ideas that enhance cat care without stretching budgets or harming the planet. Bring an open mind, and you'll leave with actionable insights to improve welfare sustainably.



CHRIS BENNETT
Head of Community Programmes & Partnerships,
Woodgreen Pets Charity



PAITON BARKER
Community Outreach Officer
Woodgreen Pets Charity

FROM CRISIS TO CARE: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT RELINQUISHMENT AND IMPROVE WELFARE

At Woodgreen we have seen countless pets and pet owners experiencing challenges in their relationships. Unfortunately, we sometimes see these challenges build to a point of crisis, but we know that relationships do not start this way. We know if we challenge the current model and provide our action earlier on, supporting people to care for pets before these issues arise or escalate, we stand the best chance of preventing relinquishment and improving welfare. This presentation explores how we leverage the strength of local communities to reach vulnerable pets as early as possible, and transform their passion and assets into a community-driven model for lasting positive impact on pet welfare.

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We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all our conference sponsors and exhibitors. Their generous support secures essential resources, ensuring ADCH can provide valuable services and opportunities to all our members, regardless of their size. This support plays a crucial role in heavily subsidising conference ticket prices, helping to make the event more accessible.

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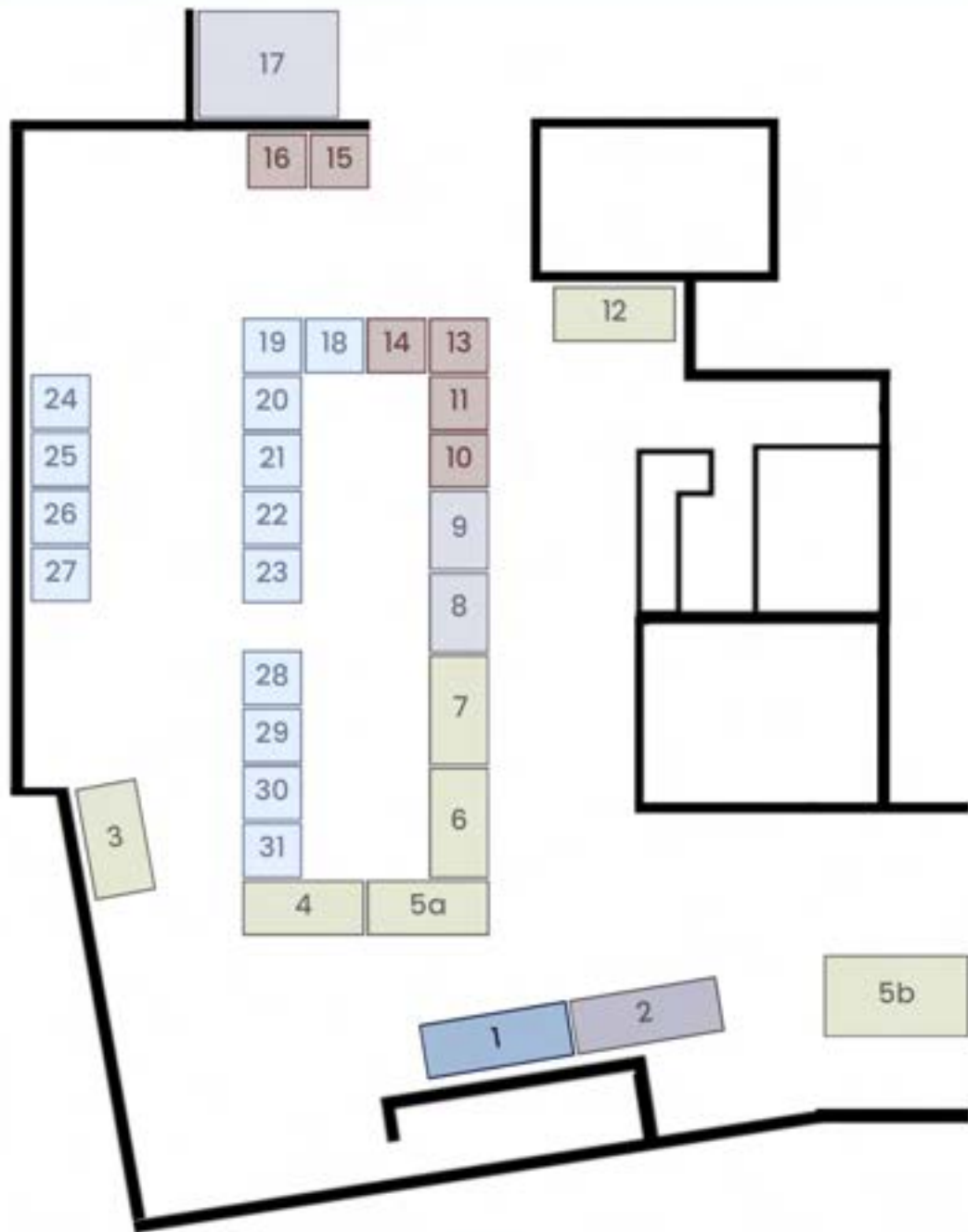


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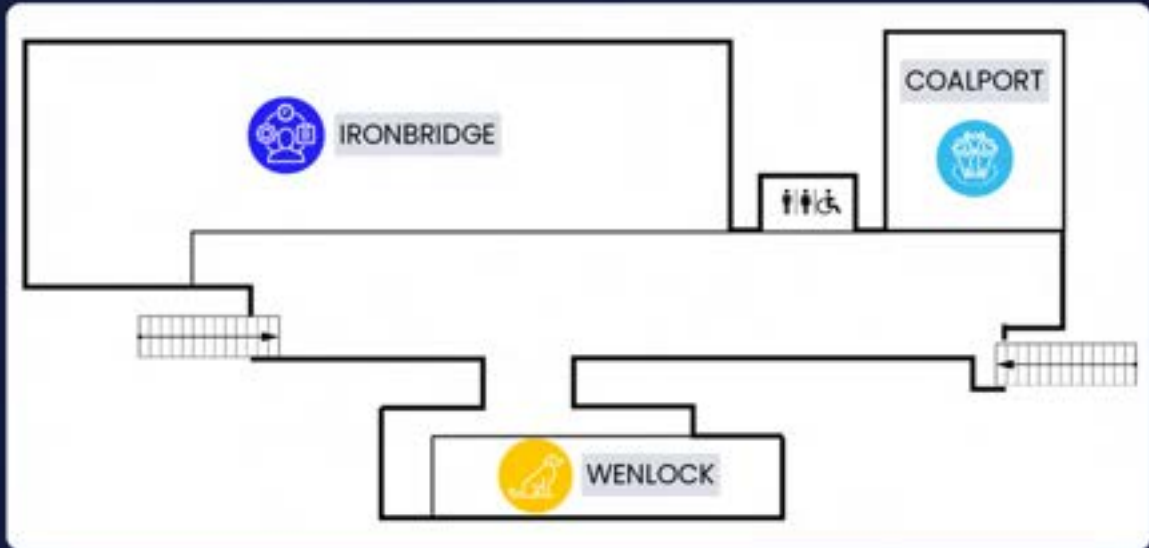
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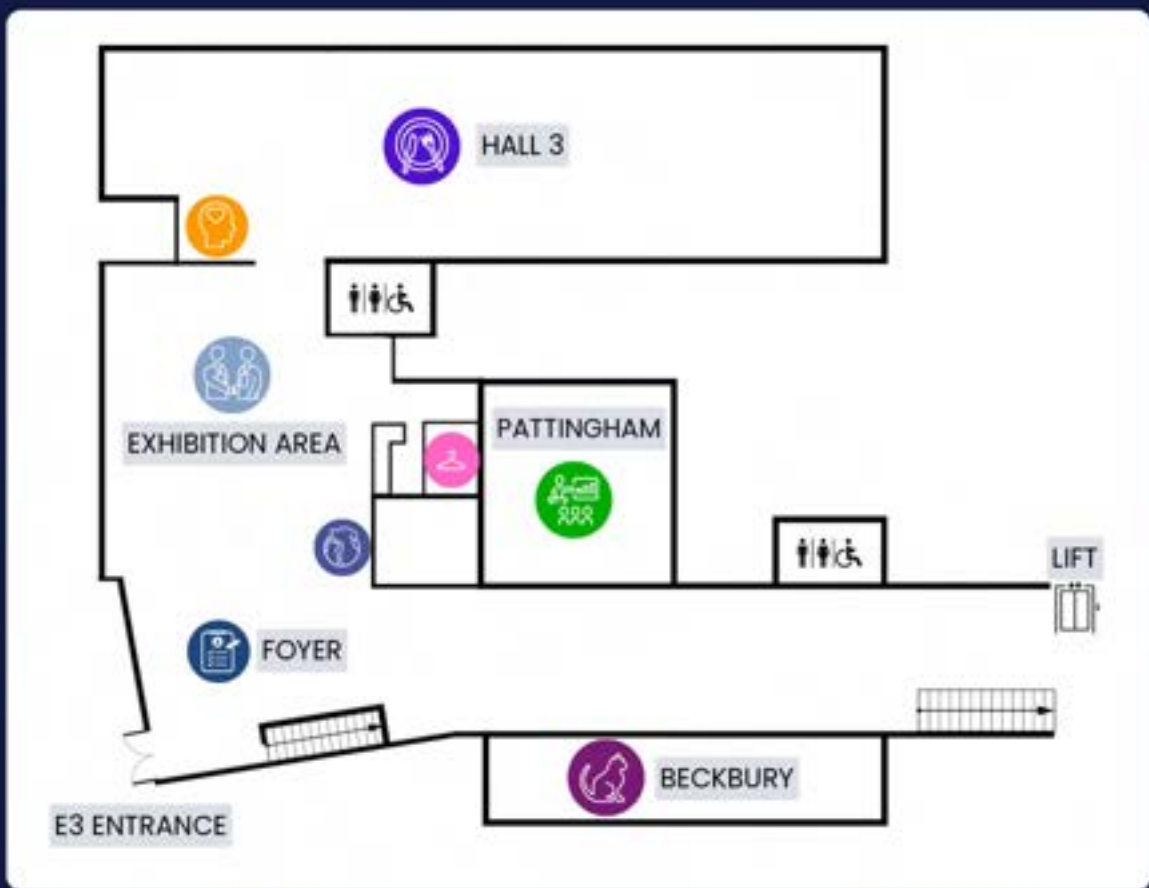


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