

Additional guidance for assessment for foster networks and/or rescues operating from Private Boarding Establishments

Pre assessment call for:	
Date:	
Carried out by:	

This document is to help ADCH Volunteer Assessors work out how best to carry out assessments of organisations whose main operation is an extended foster network, private boarding establishment (see definitions below), or a mixture of both.

Definitions:	
PBE – Private boarding establishment	Also referred to as a commercial kennel/cattery that is not owned by the organisation. The facility will likely also take in boarding animals for the general public, although they may run exclusively, or almost exclusively, with rescue animals.
Foster	Foster networks are a group of fosterers, normally volunteers, where rescue animals are cared for on a temporary basis in the fosterers' own homes or in small animal housing units.
Organisation	Refers to the rescue organisation, which could be an existing ADCH member or applicant

When carrying out assessments of organisations who operate out of locations other than a rescue centre, the way we apply the Minimum Standards and how we decide to assess them needs special consideration. The salient point is that we want to assess where most of the organisation's animals are kept.

Through our application process, we will start to gather information about how the organisation works which will have been given to you as part of the search for assessors. The next stage once you've been appointed to the assessment is to have a call with the main contact at the organisation, to understand more about how they work with foster homes and PBEs and answer some overarching management questions. From this, you can decide how you would like to approach visits. Below are some examples:

Example 1) An organisation is using two PBEs, one is near key volunteers' homes and has less than 5 dogs or cats at any one time, the other PBE is two hours away and they always have at least 20 dogs or cats. In this instance we would need to assess where most of the animals are, particularly given the logistical possibility of having less oversight by the organisation, being further away.

Example 2) An organisation has a network of foster carers. Half of the foster carers usually have a dog or cat, other volunteers primarily support other areas of the organisation and sit on the organisation's main committee, but they also act as foster carers a couple of times a year. Whilst the committee members may have been more involved in the membership application or setting up the assessment, one or more of the regular fosterers should be visited to ensure that they are working to the organisation's procedures, and those procedures follow ADCH's Minimum Welfare and Operational Standards.

Example 3) The organisation has a mixture of foster and PBE usage. Again, the principles of where most animals are held most of the time applies. If animals are mostly in foster homes, but there is a backup arrangement with a PBE for emergency admissions, then the focus should generally be on the foster network setup, and the PBE could be checked through online research, and questioning with the organisation. You should check their licensing status with the local authority, but this cannot be relied on to assess their compliance with ADCH Minimum Standards.

The main purpose of having an initial call with the organisation (apart from establishing a relationship and answering their questions) is to understand how and where they work and typical numbers of dogs and cats in PBEs and fosterers. You can use that information to plan the assessment. During the visit to the main contact or person with responsibility for animal welfare you can assess how they ensure that welfare standards are maintained across all locations where their dogs and cats are cared for – their quality assurance.

When visiting PBEs, you should request that a member of the organisation's staff or volunteers attends with you as ADCH's relationship is with the organisation, and they have a contract with the PBE. Minimum Standard 80 requires that the organisation routinely physically visits the premises and there should be a good working relationship between the PBE and the organisation being assessed. Ideally, the PBE should have knowledge of ADCH and our Minimum Standards so what the assessor says should not come as a surprise.

When visiting foster carers in their homes, please be sure to familiarise yourself with lone working and safeguarding policies. As a general rule, visits to fosterer's homes should not be undertaken as a solo visit. Please seek advice from the staff team if needed.

You might find it helpful to record data in the table below to understand how the organisation works.

Dog Locations:				
Number of dogs today				
Number of dogs usually				
Any future plans				
Cat Locations				
Number of cats today				
Number of cats usually				
Any future plans				

GENERAL RESCUE OPERATIONS

Below are two ADCH standards where it is useful (not essential) for the organisation to send you information in advance. That enables you to consider their documentation in advance and so save time on the day of your visit.

Relevant standard	Question	Answer
70	Does the organisation have a written euthanasia policy?	
78	Are you able to supply copies of the following written procedures:	
	• Feeding	
	• Cleaning	
	• Transportation	
	• Prevention and control of disease spread	
	• Animal monitoring	
	• Death of an animal	
	• Escape of an animal (on and off premises)	
	• In an emergency	

Conclusions	
Do you plan to visit foster homes and, if so, how many and where	
Do you plan to visit for an assessment of one or more PBEs and, if so, where	
Any other comments:	

Note: If you consider that visits are needed at a distance from your main visit you can ask ADCH staff for someone else to do the visit(s). Assessors do occasionally work in tandem in different parts of the country.