

Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare



Job Description

Job Title:	Rehoming and Support Operations Manager
Responsible to:	Head of Animal Welfare
Location:	Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare
Grade:	F

Background information

Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare, founded in 1952, is a charity dedicated to giving animals a better life through prevention, support, on-site care, and sanctuary. We also empower people with the knowledge and guidance they need to treat animals with compassion and respect. Every day, we care for a wide range of animals, including cats, dogs, horses, rabbits, and small animals. While most of these animals find loving new homes, we also provide lifelong sanctuary for those that cannot be rehomed, where appropriate.

Our beautiful 43-acre site is open to visitors, offering a unique glimpse into a working animal welfare centre. Animals are at the heart of everything we do—but we couldn't achieve this without our expert and dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Surrounded by lakes, trees, and fields, and with a café, shops, parking, and other amenities, Raystede is an uplifting and rewarding place to work.

The **Animal Welfare team** includes our veterinary and animal care specialists, as well as a dedicated Rehoming & Support service. These teams work closely with colleagues across the organisation to support the charity's wider mission.

The Rehoming and Support team is responsible for managing the admission process for animals and supporting their adoption at Raystede. The team also provides advice and assistance to pet owners to help prevent surrender and improve animal welfare. As a key part of our animal welfare service, the Rehoming and Support team plays an essential role in ensuring the well-being of animals and supporting owners in responsible care.

Main Purpose of the Role

- **Provide strategic leadership and full accountability** for all operational aspects of the Rehoming and Support team, ensuring the effective admission, care, rehabilitation, and adoption of unwanted and stray animals. This includes **responsibility for the development, learning, and support of staff and volunteers**, fostering a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.

- **Lead and oversee** the Break Away scheme which provides foster for animals whose owners are fleeing domestic abuse or facing short-term hospitalisation. Close partnerships with alternative providers of this service to develop and improve standards are required.
- **Champion the highest standards of animal care and welfare**, ensuring all practices reflect best sector standards and ethical principles.
- **Lead and inspire a high-performing team** to deliver an exceptional customer experience supporting owners to prevent surrenders and working collaboratively with the wider Animal Welfare teams to achieve successful and sustainable rehabilitation and rehoming outcomes.
- **Oversee and ensure the provision of expert support, information, and advice** to potential adopters and the general public on animal care and welfare, in partnership with the wider Animal Welfare team and Education & Prevention Team.
- **Collaborate effectively across internal teams** to promote Raystede's services, strengthen partnerships, and maximise welfare interventions that align with the charity's strategic objectives.

Key Tasks

1. People Leadership and Team Development

- Provide decisive leadership and full accountability** for all staff, volunteers, and contractors within the sections, ensuring alignment with organisational policies and standards.
- Set clear priorities and allocate resources effectively**, planning and adapting team workloads to meet dynamic operational demands.
- Lead talent acquisition and onboarding**, ensuring recruitment processes attract high-calibre individuals and that induction and training deliver excellence.
- Maintain optimal staffing levels** to guarantee operational efficiency and uphold the highest welfare standards.
- Drive performance management**, conducting regular reviews, setting measurable objectives, and implementing tailored development plans to build capability.
- Design and deliver strategic training programmes** that empower the team, enhance skills, and foster a culture of continuous improvement.
- Take ownership of complex HR matters**, including disciplinary processes, ensuring fair and consistent application of policy with appropriate support.
- Inspire and motivate the team**, embedding Raystede's values and creating an environment where individuals are engaged, accountable, and committed to delivering exceptional outcomes every day.

2. Animal Welfare

- Lead and oversee** the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of health and welfare plans for all animals in foster care.
- Ensure effective coordination** of the Break Away and Home from Home foster schemes, maintaining best practice standards.
- Lead and oversee** decision-making on adopter-animal matching and guide staff through the process to maintain best practice.
- Provide expert advice and guidance to prospective owners on animal selection and care.

- e. Maintain the highest standards of cleanliness and biosecurity across all animal accommodation and related facilities.
- f. Ensure species-appropriate feeding and hydration plans are delivered consistently.
- g. Supervise and control the safe movement of animals between locations.
- h. Oversee veterinary inspections and treatments, including administration of medication and support during euthanasia procedures.
- i. Monitor and address signs of illness, injury, or abnormal behaviour promptly and effectively.
- j. Promote physical and behavioural well-being of animals in foster through structured exercise and enrichment opportunities.
- k. Develop and evaluate training programmes for foster carers, adapting strategies to enhance outcomes.
- l. Oversee the implementation and evolution of centre-wide enrichment protocols.

3. Customer Experience Leadership

- a. **Champion a culture of exceptional customer experience**, ensuring every interaction with owners, adopters and stakeholders reflects empathy, professionalism, and Raystede's values.
- b. **Lead the delivery of accurate, timely, and compassionate advice**, supporting adopters and the public with complex decisions about animal care and welfare.
- c. **Ensure seamless collaboration across departments** to provide consistent, high-quality experiences for all customers.
- d. **Act as a role model for service excellence**, setting standards and coaching the team to deliver positive, memorable experiences even in challenging circumstances

4. Fundraising, Education, and Outreach

- a. Actively lead and contribute to educational talks, tours, and events that promote animal welfare and Raystede's mission.
- b. Support fundraising and commercial activities, representing Raystede professionally and strategically.
- c. Promote Raystede's services and values to strengthen community engagement and partnership

5. Administration and Compliance

- a. **Ensure robust governance and compliance**, maintaining accurate records and documentation in line with legislation and organisational standards.
- b. Ensure all Break Away data is handled with confidentiality.
- c. **Manage and develop** the animal welfare database ensuring it is fit for purpose and meets the strategic needs of the organisation.
- d. Develop and maintain standard operating procedures aligned with best practice and legal requirements.
- e. **Take responsibility for section budgets**, ensuring financial discipline and identifying cost-saving opportunities without compromising welfare.
- f. Oversee procurement, stock control, and resource management within agreed financial parameters.
- g. Prepare and present reports and information for internal and external stakeholders, demonstrating transparency and accountability.

6. Personal Development

- a. **Model a commitment to continuous learning**, maintaining and developing personal performance through training and feedback.
- b. Build and sustain effective working relationships with colleagues and volunteers, fostering collaboration and trust.

7. Health, Safety, and Well-being

- a. **Lead health and safety compliance**, ensuring the well-being of staff, volunteers, visitors, and animals within the section.
- b. Report and address health and safety concerns promptly in line with organisational procedures.
- c. Maintain secure and clean facilities, ensuring assets are regularly inspected and maintained

8. Strategic Contribution

- a. **Provide tactical leadership** to deliver the charity's strategic objectives within the sections.
- b. Respond effectively to complex and emotionally challenging animal welfare issues with professionalism and resilience.

General

- a. At all times ensure and maintain a compassionate, professional and efficient public image for the charity
- b. Participate in supervision, appraisal, and learning and development and take personal responsibility for maintaining the knowledge and skills required for the role
- c. The manager is expected to support hands-on animal care and undertake occasional physical tasks as operational needs require.-on animal care and undertake occasional physical tasks as operational needs require.
- d. Take responsibility for ensuring own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your acts and omissions. Report any health and safety risks to your manager.
- e. Work within the policy framework of Raystede Animal Centre and adhere to the terms laid out in the employee handbook

Key Strategic Relationships

- **Provide leadership and foster collaboration** across all animal welfare teams, ensuring integrated, high-performing operations on site.
- **Work in partnership with the wider Animal Welfare teams** to shape and oversee rehoming strategies, enabling efficient intake and successful adoption outcomes.
- **Engage with the Raystede veterinary team at a strategic level** to guarantee the highest standards of animal health and welfare.
- **Act as a senior representative to the public**, ensuring exceptional customer experience through informed guidance, empathetic communication, and alignment with Raystede's mission.
- **Build and maintain relationships with external veterinary providers**, securing specialist and out-of-hours care to meet complex needs.
- **Develop strategic partnerships with specialist external bodies and organisations**, advancing knowledge, influencing best practice, and strengthening Raystede's reputation as a sector leader.
- **Expand and nurture external networks**, collaborating with other organisations to maximise welfare impact and extend reach to benefit more animals.

- **Collaborate with all internal departments**, ensuring organisational alignment and operational excellence across Raystede's services

Scope and Accountability

Decision making and limits of authority	• Exercise strategic judgment and accountability for all decisions relating to animal health, welfare, and husbandry, ensuring tailored approaches that uphold best practice and ethical standards. • Lead and approve rehoming decisions to safeguard the ongoing welfare of animals and ensure successful adoption outcomes. • Take ownership of Break Away intake decisions, balancing operational capacity with welfare priorities and organisational objectives. • Hold delegated financial authority up to £500.00, applying sound judgment and cost-conscious decision-making.
Financial Stewardship	• Provide leadership in budget management, ensuring all expenditure aligns with agreed financial plans and delivers value for money. • Drive cost-efficiency initiatives without compromising welfare standards. • Oversee occasional cash handling and payment processes with integrity and compliance.
Asset Management	• Ensure the security and operational readiness of departmental and wider organisational assets, including facilities, equipment, and resources. • Proactively identify and report defects or risks, escalating to Estates or senior management as appropriate. • Take responsibility for rectifying issues related to stock and supplies to maintain continuity of care.
Information Governance	• Lead compliance with data protection standards, ensuring secure and accurate use of Anilog and other systems. • Maintain confidentiality and integrity of all management information, safeguarding organisational and stakeholder trust.
People Leadership	• Provide operational leadership and accountability for the immediate team, volunteers, and temporary staff within the section. • Ensure effective workforce planning and staffing levels to meet operational and welfare objectives. • Lead recruitment and onboarding processes, ensuring alignment with organisational values and standards.

	• Oversee contractors working within the sections, ensuring compliance and quality delivery.
Legal, regulatory and compliance responsibility	• Ensure full compliance with animal welfare legislation and organisational policies, embedding best practice across all operations. • Take responsibility for personal and team health and safety, ensuring adherence to procedures and proactive risk management.

Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Education and Qualifications	• Minimum Level 3 Certificate in Animal Care • Management qualification or verifiable relevant experience.	• Specialist animal welfare qualifications relevant to role.
Knowledge and Experience	• Proven ability to lead in a public-facing or visitor-focused environment, demonstrating confidence in managing complex interactions and delivering exceptional experiences. • Extensive knowledge and practical experience in advanced animal care and welfare, with the ability to set and uphold best practice standards. • Demonstrated capability to make critical, high-impact decisions regarding animal welfare, balancing ethical considerations with organisational priorities. • Track record of driving customer experience excellence, ensuring interactions reflect empathy, professionalism, and organisational values. • Significant experience in leading and developing teams, including direct line management, coaching, and performance improvement. • Strong organisational and administrative skills, with the ability to leverage IT systems and data for informed decision-making and operational efficiency. • Experience in and an understanding of the problems faced by people fleeing domestic abuse with animals.	• Proven experience in leading and managing organisational change, guiding teams through transitions with clarity, resilience, and engagement. • Demonstrated ability to adapt and evolve animal care strategies based on emerging evidence and best practice, ensuring continuous improvement. • Track record of implementing new practices and driving innovation within an organisation, influencing stakeholders and embedding sustainable change. • Experience in supporting charity fundraising initiatives, including on-site and off-site events, with a focus on stakeholder engagement and impact. • Professional experience working with the species relevant to this role, applying advanced knowledge to inform strategic decisions and operational standards. • Ability to operate effectively in challenging environments, including exposure to unpleasant odours, noises, and emotionally demanding situations, while maintaining professionalism and leadership presence.

Key Skills and Abilities	• Exceptional communication and influencing skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to engage confidently at all levels. • Proven ability to build strong, collaborative relationships within diverse teams and across departments, fostering trust and alignment. • Demonstrated capability to manage competing priorities and deadlines, maintaining focus and delivering results under pressure. • Strong interpersonal skills with tact and diplomacy, enabling effective management of sensitive relationships and situations. • Ability to lead objectively in highly emotive scenarios, making sound decisions based on available resources and organisational priorities. • Resilience and professionalism in handling challenging animal welfare issues, maintaining composure and leadership presence.	• Ability to handle a variety of animals.
Personal Attributes	• Authentic and people-focused leader, able to build trust and inspire confidence across teams and stakeholders. • Proactive and self-driven, demonstrating creativity and strategic thinking to solve complex challenges. • Positive and resilient, maintaining a solutions-focused mindset and a “can-do” attitude in dynamic environments. • Highly committed and tenacious, with the ability to lead through	

	adversity and deliver results under pressure. • Change-oriented and adaptable, embracing innovation and guiding teams through organisational transformation. • Decisive under pressure, making sound judgments when faced with competing priorities and constant demands. • Flexible and collaborative, supporting wider organisational needs and responding effectively to unplanned challenges. • Champion of equality, diversity, and inclusion, embedding these principles into leadership practice and team culture. • Empathetic and values-driven, demonstrating a deep commitment to animal welfare and the charity's mission.	
Other	• To have a flexible approach to working hours. • Availability of vehicle for work use and in possession of a current full UK driving licence (max 6 points). • Flexibility of circumstances and willingness to visit national and regional venues for CPD. This may involve some overnight stays, occasional work in the evenings, and at weekends.	