

RAYSTEDE

MAGAZINE



RAYSTEDE
GIVING ANIMALS A BETTER LIFE

Spring 2025 Issue 27

IN THIS ISSUE:

**FIND OUT ABOUT SOME OF
THE FABULOUS FRIENDSHIPS
FORGED AT RAYSTEDE.**

ALSO INSIDE

Koda's progress

Bonding bunnies in the 'Bun-galow'

Gizmo gets a home

WELCOME

to our Raystede magazine

Harvey

Stephanie Smith



Harvey



Stephanie Smith
Chief Executive

Last year was a challenging time for Raystede and that continues as we enter 2025. We are still seeing lots of people sadly having to give up their beloved pets. Last year saw the highest number of surrender requests and it looks as if that's an ongoing trend. It's a very bleak situation as behind every animal there is a story of people who can no longer care for them.

Like many rescue centres, we are bursting at the seams, so we are desperately looking for foster carers to help relieve some of the pressure, particularly for animals who find it stressful at the centre and need a homely environment. Also, we urgently need foster carers for our Break Away temporary emergency fostering scheme helping people fleeing domestic abuse or short-term hospitalisation and cannot take their animals with them. If you can help, do please get in touch.

We are doing our utmost to help as many animals as we can and the good news is that our rehoming numbers are climbing. You can read some of our success stories of animals who have found their loving homes on page 26. We have also set up a new facility – the ‘bun-galow’ – so we can take in more indoor rabbits and increase our bonding service, thus helping more rabbits in the long run – please see page 10.

I cannot tell you how much it means to have wonderful people like you helping us to care for all the animals who so desperately need our help. Our Founder, Miss Raymonde-Hawkins, set up the Friends of Raystede in 1955 – now one of the oldest schemes of its kind in the UK – and we are looking forward to celebrating 70 years of friendship in 2025. You can read more on page 17.

I am looking forward to the warmer months at Raystede. Spring is a particularly lovely time to visit, especially as the tortoises and terrapins will be coming out of hibernation and the horses, ponies and donkeys will be sunning themselves in the fields. We love welcoming you to see the difference your support makes. Please remember to book a free ticket as we limit the number of visitors every day for the welfare of our nervous rescue animals and to ensure you have a better visitor experience.

Thank you for everything you do for Raystede. Whether you donate, sponsor one of our animals, volunteer, shop with us, fundraise, leave a gift in your Will or simply tell everyone you know about our work, we are incredibly grateful. Please continue to support us – together we can help even more animals in need.

With very best wishes,

Stephanie Smith

Raystede's CEO



Visiting Raystede

Animal welfare is our priority, so we let our animals live as naturally as possible. Also, as many are shy and nervous, you may not be able to see all of them during your visit. In addition, depending on the season and weather, they might choose to be outside, or they may retreat inside – no day is the same!

Some of the animals you may see:

- Goats, horses, ponies, alpacas and sheep are usually to be found grazing in the fields.
- Mice, rats, chinchillas, degus, gerbils and hamsters can be spotted in the Small Animals area.
- The rabbits can be nervous but you may catch them enjoying some fresh greens in the Rabbitry.
- Our colony of tortoises are often out on warmer days and our terrapins can be seen basking in and around the lake. They are likely to be in hibernation from the Autumn until Spring.
- **On 25 January, the UK Government applied an Avian Influenza Protection Zone across the UK. This does mean that our Aviaries and part of the lakes area have subsequently been closed to the public until the restrictions are lifted. We do NOT have this virus at Raystede but we are required to put in place a range of measures to protect our birds.**

A few things to remember when visiting Raystede





- Entry is free and we are open from 10am to 4pm every day, apart from Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.
- We politely ask all visitors to be quiet and calm for all our animals. If you stand still and watch quietly, you'll see how they behave and learn more about them. We also ask that you don't feed any of our animals – they have a natural healthy diet so have everything they need. Some of our animals may be on special diets for health reasons.
- There is a free daily guided tour at 11.30am – meet your tour guide outside Visitor Information for a gentle stroll around Raystede and an insight into our work rescuing, rehoming and caring for the animals.
- Raystede is dog-friendly and dogs on short leads are very welcome. You can take dogs into our café, pet goods shop and charity shop.
- Don't forget, there's free parking, you can browse for bargains in our pet goods and charity shops, enjoy delicious home-cooked lunches and snacks in our café.
- Visitor numbers are limited as this is beneficial to the welfare of the animals in our care, and our visitors have a better experience. **It is essential to book a ticket in advance to avoid disappointment.** It's easy to book online at www.raystede.org/visit-us or phone our friendly Visitor Information Team on 01825 840252.



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ANIMAL WELFARE UPDATE

We're continuously improving our service to meet the needs of animals

Following an unsteady start to last year, we've seen rehoming figures bounce back and our animal welfare improvement projects flourish. Our Head of Animal Welfare tells us what's been happening and what to look forward to.

Although rehoming got off to a slow start in 2024, we started to see more stability in the numbers of animals finding homes towards the end of the year. We were delighted to see a strong success in our kennels, with significantly more dogs finding new homes than the previous year.

We've also been doing our bit to help animals out in our local community by supporting pet owners through more of our veterinary events. In these events we have microchipped and neutered cats, as well as vaccinated rabbits. We are big advocates of rabbit vaccination. It helps to protect them against Rabbit Viral Haemorrhagic Disease and Myxomatosis, both are common diseases in the UK, and easily spread.

On site, Raystede's animal care teams have been hard at work designing exciting improvements and new facilities to care for more animals, and to an even higher standard. We are continuously thinking about how we can evolve our facilities based on the latest research and learning to ensure we do our best for the animals in our care, always.

As well as planning large improvements for the animals at Raystede, we've also made smaller changes. These include a new area to house indoor rabbits over winter, the installation of hatches between some of our dog and cat pens to optionally increase their size and planting a new copse of native trees in one of our paddocks, which is not only enriching for our animals but also great for wildlife.

And finally, it has been fantastic to see Project Terrapin operating so successfully, with over 90 terrapins assisted since it opened. Providing a window into how difficult it is to keep terrapins is key to encouraging people to think very carefully before taking on a terrapin as a pet. It's also wonderful to see the terrapins thrive in such a spacious and environmentally enriched habitat.

All in all, it has been incredibly encouraging to see our centre navigate the challenges of the last few years and continue to develop and thrive for the animals that need our help. We're so thankful to all our supporters, volunteers and carers for helping to make this happen.

Thank you

We'd like to thank Tania and Martin who held a 'Fun Scurry Day' and raised £550. This amount could pay to run our veterinary surgery for two days.

MORE INFO

For more information about Project Terrapin, visit: www.raystede.org/project_terrpin/

KENNELS

Star dog Koda learns to socialise

Koda arrived at Raystede a timid and badly treated pup. With time, patience and a tailored training plan, he blossomed into a cheeky boy with a big personality.

Koda came into our care at the beginning of 2023, aged three years old. This beautiful German Shepherd Husky cross was badly neglected – he was found locked in a crate and in very poor condition. Understandably, Koda was timid at first, but he was quick to make friends.

We gave Koda time to slowly adjust to his surroundings, before gradually allowing him to learn about the outside world. He followed a training plan tailored towards his needs, and he proved to be a keen learner. During training we started to see Koda's cheeky side coming out. Our Kennels Team described him as a real clown. He loved to play and search for food which all helped his wellbeing.

Making friends

Koda's main behavioural struggle was around other dogs. He had never had the opportunity to socialise properly, and he became anxious and frustrated when he saw other dogs as he didn't know how to mix.

We used cue words and regular socialisation activities to help manage this. Utilising our dog enclosures to provide a safe area where he could watch and learn from other dogs, we taught him to focus on his carer

and watch calmly. This helped to ease his anxiety. The calmer he felt, the better able he was to read other dogs' body language and mirror their social signals.

It wasn't all work for Koda, he also enjoyed calm cuddle time in our indoor environment with staff and volunteers. He even received massages and Reiki with our animal therapy volunteers!

Koda was ready to join his new family

After over a year of persistence and care, we finally found a potential home for Koda in September 2024. The adopters made several visits to the site, spending time cuddling him, playing with him in our training runs and walking him on site.

When the time was right for Koda to transition to his new home, our Kennels Team provided advice and support every step of the way. Koda has settled into his new home brilliantly and he is very happy to be there. We will miss this cheeky chap but look forward to hearing updates about his new life.

Koda in his new home

Thank you

A big well done to the team at Cootes Vets who raised £664 with their dog show. This amount could cover the cost of behavioural support sessions for 24 dogs.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

To see all the dogs currently looking for their forever homes, visit: www.raystede.org/adopt/dogs/

EQUINES

Meet our equines and their friends

If you saw our urgent appeal last summer, you'll remember Mags the pony. He arrived at Raystede with a multitude of health issues. Find out what kind of progress he's made. Plus, meet our cuddliest donkey (and cover star), Dot.

Mags

Mags on arrival at Raystede



Brave Mags is on the mend

From the moment that Mags emerged from his horsebox, it was evident that this 14-year-old pony was experiencing a huge amount of pain and needed immediate treatment and care. Mags was diagnosed with chronic laminitis, an inflammation and damage to the tissue of his hooves, affecting his ability to walk. The condition meant that he would be unable to walk, pain-free, until he had recovered.

On top of this life-changing condition, Mags was also dealing with a number of other health issues. His blood tests showed he was quite anaemic, he had a major lice and worm burden, and he had severe conjunctivitis in both eyes. Poor Mags, despite his brave demeanour, and accepting all his treatment without a fuss, was clearly suffering.

No quick fix

Our vets got to work treating Mags for his conditions. They also performed X-rays on all four of his hooves. The results showed severe rotational changes to all four feet, severely impacting his gait and ability to move. He needed regular and ongoing corrective farriery to regain his comfort. For four weeks, Mags was unable to leave the stable, he had to wear Styrofoam pads taped to all four feet to increase his comfort.

Alice Champion, Equine Manager at Raystede, said: "Mags is going to need a lot of treatment and support if he is ever to make a full recovery. He is stoic; however, his sad brown eyes speak volumes about the pain and discomfort he is feeling underneath. He could be here for some time as we don't anticipate this being a quick fix."

Five months later...

The progress that Mags has made since he arrived at Raystede has been astounding. Today, he is a picture of health. He is worm and lice-free. He has friends in the field who he loves to play and run around with. Most importantly, he is pain-free.

We are still working to refine a long-term management plan for Mags. Grass can be a danger to him as it accumulates sugar, and too much sugar can be unhealthy for equines, especially those at risk of laminitis. Mags has regular blood tests to ensure that he isn't getting too much.

He also spends daily time in the sand school with his friends where he enjoys walking and long reining to help control his weight.

We are so impressed with Mags's recovery. He has won the hearts of our Equine Team who tell us that he is a super cuddly boy. Mags is now looking for a new loving home, please visit our website to find out more.

Introducing Dot, our most senior (and most snuggly) donkey

At 29 years old, Dot is our eldest donkey at Raystede. She is also our snuggliest and will often plant herself next to staff for cuddles. She is best friends with another donkey named Lizzy and the two of them are inseparable.

Recently, Dot took a trip to the dentist (along with Lizzy). Dot had recently been diagnosed with EORTH – equine odontoclastic tooth resorption and hypercementosis) – which is a progressive dental condition that affects the incisors in older horses and donkeys. It can cause bad breath, drooling and weight loss due to discomfort when eating. During the vet visit, we were advised that it would be kindest to remove the offending teeth.

Dot underwent a procedure, the aftercare involved complex pain, diet and stress management, as donkeys really struggle with changes to their routines. It was hard to see Dot suffer, but the Equine Team stayed right by her side, providing plenty of care and a buffet of warm mashes to ensure she was eating enough.

After a week, Dot was back to her happy self. Her gums healed nicely, and she is now able to eat even better than before. Dot is thoroughly enjoying grazing on three bowls of fibre mash a day to ensure she is topped up. Lizzy would like to help her out, but sadly, her diet restricts her to only one bowl a day!

Dot



Thank you

A big thank you to nine year old Artie who ran over the course of one month, the equivalent of his home to Raystede, a huge 42 miles, and in doing so raised £574.39! This figure is enough to cover the direct care costs for one of our donkeys for one month.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Did you know that you can buy a gift for one of our horses or donkeys via our Amazon Wish list? Gifts range from food and meds to bedding and coats. Why not make their day and buy them a present - www.raystede.org/support-us/amazon-wishlist/

CATTERY

Gizmo gets a home

Even the most independent cats enjoy the safety, comfort and emotional connection that comes with having a home of their own. That's why we're always delighted to see long-stay cats like Gizmo find their forever homes.

Gizmo was sadly surrendered into our care at the beginning of 2024, when his owners couldn't cope with his behaviour. He had a severe flea infestation which was making him scratch constantly and resulted in some very sore looking cuts and open wounds. Gizmo was also missing fur because the itchiness was causing him to over-groom.

We immediately treated Gizmo with antibiotics and flea treatment, prescribed by our vet. The course of treatment, and a healthy dose of TLC, helped Gizmo improve and he became much healthier and brighter.

Gizmo's road to recovery didn't end there. Shortly after his improvement, he started to show signs of allergies and he was incredibly sore and itchy around his back legs and tummy area, making him once again lick the sore spots on his body. We gave Gizmo a buster collar to prevent further licking and we put him on a course of high-dose steroids. He was also given a bland diet, and we introduced a special shampoo to help his skin stay healthy and reduce the itchiness.

Gizmo shows his true colours

After all this treatment, we started to see a huge improvement in Gizmo, not just in his health and physical appearance, but also in his behaviour. Underneath all the unhappiness caused by his terrible skin irritations, Gizmo was an extremely loveable chap.

Once his skin issues were under control, we decided it was time to start looking for a new home for him. He had been in our care for four months and all the staff had grown very fond of Gizmo, but it was sad not to see him in a home of his own.

It took a while for Gizmo to find the right family as he needed someone that could commit to keeping up his ongoing treatment. Thankfully that chance came in October, when a lovely family visited the centre and fell in love with Gizmo. He is now thriving in his new home – and loving every minute of it!



Gizmo at Raystede

Thank you

We'd like to thank Simon Osbourne who held a plant sale to raise money for Raystede and raised £500. This amount could cover the cost of settling in eight cats into our Cattery.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Would you like to give a cat like Gizmo a forever home? You can see all the current cats in our Cattery at www.raystede.org/adopt/cats/

AVIARIES

Our brilliant birds

We've had a busy few months in our Aviaries, caring for unwell birds, catching budgerigars for their checkups and, sadly, saying goodbye to a dear old friend.

Boysie is bouncing back

Boysie, one of our Red-lored Amazons, has been continuing with his intensive treatment after a complex diagnosis last year.

You may remember Boysie from our spring appeal and magazine. He was suffering from a multitude of illnesses including an enlarged liver, inflammation of the air sacs, a fungal infection and dehydration. All things combined could have been life-threatening to Boysie.

Thankfully, Boysie has made great progress with his treatment. He is still having medication administered multiple times daily, and spends some time in his specialist nebulising unit (which helps to clear his airways), where he enjoys playing with puzzle toys and stacking cups. The Aviaries Team say he's been in good spirits and has seemed brighter in himself.

Outside of treatment, Boysie has been spending time playing with boxes, chewing up new toys, and being his usual cheeky self! He still has a way to go, but we are seeing some promising improvement in his condition. Hopefully, we will be able to get him back to full strength soon.

Health check for our budgies

We have recently been busy catching all our budgies in our flock for their regular health check, weight check and claw trim. Catching every bird in a flock is a big job, as we're sure you can imagine, but it is important that we check them regularly to monitor their health, weight and general condition. That way, we can catch any potential issues and treat them early on.

So long, Edwina

Unfortunately, we had to say goodbye to one of our beloved older birds, Edwina. She was an Eleonora medium sulphur-crested Cockatoo.

Edwina arrived at Raystede in 1999 after surviving a house fire. She was over 60 years old and spent 25 of those years in our care. Even though she arrived severely plucked, she never let that dull her spirit and enjoyed bossing staff and volunteers around – even in her twilight years!

During her time at Raystede, Edwina worked with our Aviaries Team to educate the public about bird welfare, engaging in educational talks with visitors. She was a valuable member of the team, and she will be hugely missed by everyone at Raystede.



Sarah and Edwina

Thank you

We'd like to thank the team at Coastway Vets who took to the water in 2024 and participated in the Lewes to Newhaven raft race raising £1,306.75 for Raystede. This amount could cover the care cost for one bird for a whole year.

SMALL ANIMALS

Maia
and Clio

Bonding bunnies and keeping terrapins toastie...

Over the past year, we've made many improvements to our centre to provide animals – new and old – with the best chance to thrive. Read on to learn how our littlest residents have benefitted.

The Bun-galow is a great place to make friends

All rabbits need to live in pairs and groups which helps keep them happy and calm. At Raystede, we provide a bonding service for single rabbits looking for a new companion in their home.

To support and improve this work, we have opened a new indoor rabbit facility – the 'Bun-galow' – to provide additional bonding space, as well as housing indoor rabbits over winter.

The Bun-galow, which opened last November, consists of four pens which can be split for bonding purposes. This will help to keep our bonding waiting list flowing and enable us to help even more single rabbits looking for companions.

Previously, we only had space to accept a few indoor rabbits over the winter months in our isolation units. Now, thanks to the Bun-galow, we can assist double the number of indoor rabbits during the colder months.

Helping terrapins through winter

As we move towards Spring, our outdoor terrapins will be coming out of brumation (a process like hibernation) and it is a beautiful sight. But over the past few months, we've been more concerned with keeping some of our terrapins indoors.

Tilde, a red eared slider terrapin, is one of our oldest residents at over 50 years old. Unfortunately, she developed a respiratory infection last year that required treatment and keeping warm. She spent her winter in our intake and isolation unit, where she has made a remarkable recovery.

Several other terrapins overwintered with Tilde in the indoor quarantine facilities. Terri, who was brought to us as a stray, completed her isolation there before she was released into the lake last September. She is now flourishing in her new home.

Tilde

Bonded sisters, Maia and Clio, are looking for a home

Maia and Clio (pictured above) arrived in November 2022 at just six weeks old with their mum. They are now our longest stay rabbits, despite being young and healthy. It can be hard to rehome bonded rabbits as many people are looking for a companion for an existing rabbit.

Maia and Clio would make great pets. They are both very sweet and love their food – and anybody who feeds them! Read more about them on the Small Animal adoption page on our website.

Thank you

A huge thank you to John Strong for his generous donation towards our new rabbit bonding facility, the 'Bun-galow'.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Rabbits are a long-term commitment and require lots of space. If you feel you could provide a home for a bonded pair, or any rabbit at Raystede, we will happily provide you with all the support you need. Visit www.raystede.org/adopt/small-animals/ for more information.

Celebrating all creatures small and furry

Last year alone, Raystede received nearly 1,000 surrender requests for small animals. Unfortunately, we don't have space for them all. That's why we're doing all we can to improve the lives of small animals through raising awareness about their welfare needs.

Did you know guinea pigs purr when they're happy? Or that gerbils are tunnelling experts, and chinchillas can live up to 20 years!

These are just a few of the fascinating facts shared by our friendly experts during two special animal events at Raystede: Guinea Pig Day on 21 September (celebrating the national Guinea Pig Awareness Week) and Small Animal Day on 30 November.

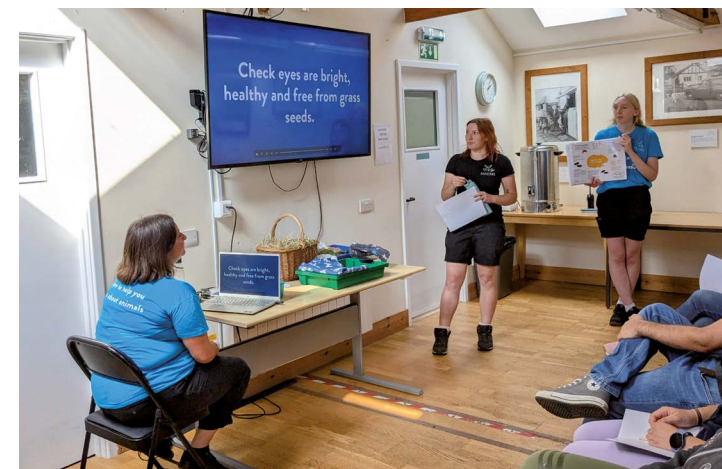
Last year, nearly 500 visitors joined us to celebrate a variety of small animals over these two dedicated events. Fans of mice, hamsters, gerbils, rats, degus, chinchillas, guinea pigs and rabbits, visited to learn more about these often-misunderstood pets.

Small animals have complex needs

Although small animals are often considered simple 'starter pets', they require just as much care and attention as any other animal. Each species has unique needs, from the right housing and nutrition to proper enrichment and companionship.

People who attended our events had plenty of opportunities to learn more through fun, interactive activities. They learned how to 'speak piggy' and discovered the 'key to our small animals' hearts' by following our learning trails. Guinea pig enthusiasts took on the guinea pig food challenge to distinguish healthy foods from unhealthy ones and practiced health checks on a toy guinea pig.

On Small Animal Day, families explored what makes a dream home for small animals, with many surprised by the size and type of enclosures needed for these animals to thrive.



Ask the experts

At Raystede, we strongly believe that adopting rescued small animals has many benefits and is the best choice for people and the animals. To support prospective adopters, we hosted drop-in adoption advice sessions during both events. Visitors spoke with our experts about the process, learned about current animals seeking forever homes and received guidance on animal care.

Our Guinea Pig Health Check Masterclass, led by our Small Animals Team, was particularly popular. One visitor said: "The masterclass was hugely helpful; any guinea pig owner or future owner should attend. You can never have too much information! Everyone is so knowledgeable and friendly."

Thank you

A big well done to Mark Sweeting who ran the Hove 10K in support of Raystede and raised £170. This amount could cover the cost of providing bedding for our small animals for one month.

MORE INFO

Not sure which animal is the perfect match for you? Check out our new guide, Things to consider Before Getting a Small Pet, to help you decide: www.raystede.org/smallspectadvice

FOSTERING



Could you be a fabulous foster carer?

There is always a huge need for fostering at Raystede. Foster carers help us free up space for new animals that need to come into our care, and it gives long-stay animals some quality time living in a home environment. We speak to one of our fabulous foster carers about her experience.

Fostering an animal from Raystede can provide many benefits for those who love animals but aren't able to take one on full time. If you like to take regular holidays, you think your circumstances might change at some point, or you can't afford to keep an animal right now, then fostering could suit you.

Animals may need to be fostered because it is taking them a bit longer to find their forever home. This could be because they've had a difficult past, they may be struggling to adapt to life in a rehoming centre, or simply that they have just been overlooked. Whatever the circumstances, we provide our foster carers with all the support they need to welcome an animal into their home.

It can be a very rewarding experience, as foster carer, Georgia, explains:

"My teenage daughter and I used to volunteer at a farm for rescue animals so we've seen what difference a kind home can make to an animal's life. When we heard Raystede was looking for foster carers, we jumped at the chance."

We were interested in offering rabbits a home because I know what great pets they are. I grew up with rabbits, some of whom were house bunnies, and I know they're such personable, funny companions. Our foster bunnies, Bella and Binky, have not disappointed us!

It's been so lovely meeting everyone at Raystede through the fostering scheme, everyone has been so kind, supportive and friendly. Signing up to become a foster-carer was a straightforward process, and my metaphorical hand was held at every step by the Raystede team!

I would whole-heartedly recommend animal fostering with Raystede, it's a pleasure to help animals in their time of need, and we've really enjoyed joining the Raystede family."



**FOSTER
TODAY**

For more information on fostering, please visit www.raystede.org/foster

SPONSORSHIP

Once an animal lover, always an animal lover

When it comes to caring for animals, age has no limit, as one of our oldest and youngest animal sponsors prove.

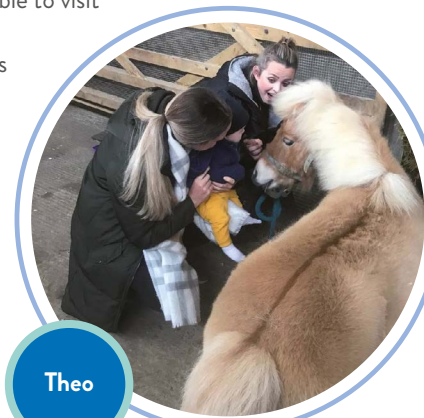
One of the things we love about Raystede is the wide range of supporters we have. This is something we especially see with our sponsors. Sponsoring an animal is simple and doesn't require a huge commitment, but it can be very rewarding. It's perfect for all ages – as these two supporters show.

Buddy

Buddy was gifted a Poppet sponsorship for his 91st birthday in 2023 by his daughter. He's just celebrated his 92nd birthday and continues to sponsor Poppet – a sweet natured, but very cheeky miniature donkey. Buddy has attended two sponsor tours where he got to meet Poppet.

Theo

At the other end of the age spectrum, Theo was given a Pony Herd sponsorship at just six months old! His Nanny, Kylie said, "I originally started to sponsor the Pony Herd for my grandson Theo's first Christmas but have continued as I wanted to give something back. As a family we have spent a lifetime with horses and miss having them in our lives. Being able to visit Raystede with Theo has introduced him to animals – he loves it!"



Do you know somebody who would like to be an animal sponsor?

Sponsoring an animal at Raystede is a wonderful way to help us be there for the abandoned and unwanted animals that desperately need help.

There are a range of animals you can sponsor from a goat and a turkey to an entire herd of ponies. Your sponsorship gives you twice yearly updates and the opportunity to visit your animal through booked sponsor tours.

Sponsorship also makes a wonderful gift for the person that's difficult to buy for or to provide year round benefits for a friend or family member.

Of course, the best part about becoming an animal sponsor is that you get to be there for all the animals in our care, including the ones that cannot be rehomed and rely on Raystede's care all year round.



**READY TO
SPONSOR?**

To find out more, visit www.raystede.org/sponsor or call our Supporter Care Team on 01825 840747.

FUNDRAISING

Changing animals' lives, one donation at a time

Our fundraisers continue to amaze us. Not only are they raising funds that are instrumental to the work we do, but they are doing it in the most imaginative ways. Whether it's £1 or £1,000, every donation has an impact on animals' lives. These are just some of the ways that fundraisers have helped to support our work, their way.

Lola and Jasmine's Online Pet Show

We've been so impressed by the creativity of young fundraiser, Lola, aged 14. She has been fundraising in honour of her dog Jasmine, a gorgeous Papillon, who was recently diagnosed with an auto immune disease. Lola and her mum, Helen, visit Raystede regularly and they are keen to help support the animals in our care.

After Jasmine's diagnosis, Lola decided to raise money for Raystede and some other local animal welfare charities. She set up Lola and Jasmine's Online Pet Show, with a bit of help from her mum, in August 2024.

It is a private Facebook group with 498 members and is growing with ongoing activities. Lola makes her own rosettes for the show, and a small gift is given to everyone who participates. Classes run for

a month at a time, and all pet owners are welcome. Entry is only £1, and all profits go to Lola's chosen charities.

Lola talked to us about her inspiration. She said, "I am educated at home, and Jasmine is my best friend and constant companion, along with her partner in crime, Jess, who is a Chihuahua and Papillon cross. Jasmine gives me so much love, support and confidence, so I was devastated to find out this year that Jasmine has MUA (autoimmune meningitis). I want her to enjoy the best life possible for as long as possible, and this inspired me to support other animals through fundraising."

Lola's passion and determination paid off. So far, she has raised £1,177 for her chosen charities and donated £415 to Raystede. We want to say a big thank you to Lola, and her companions, Jasmine and Jess, for all their hard work.



Lola and
Jasmine

Bupa braves the Drop

On Thursday 29 August 2024, #TeamRaystede took on the Drop360 challenge and abseiled down the i360 in Brighton. Amongst the team, there were eight members of staff from Bupa, one of our corporate partners. They bravely completed the challenge and raised an incredible £3,159.

Bupa has also supported us by sponsoring our 2024 staff and volunteer onboarding programme, which helped settle in 121 new starters over 14 sessions. Added to this, Bupa employees volunteered for four days at Raystede in 2024.

Our Corporate Partnership Manager, Mikayla, visited Bupa in their Brighton offices to thank everyone involved and highlight the impact of their partnership with Raystede on our ability to help more animals in need. Thank you, Bupa!

Bupa Team



Raystede and
corporate
partner,
Brufords



Could your company make a difference?

Becoming one of our partners can bring huge benefits to your company and employees. We love seeing teams taking on challenges, volunteering and deepening their connection to our cause – as well as bonding with each other in the process.

To find out more about how to become a corporate partner email partnerships@raystede.org or visit www.raystede.org/corporatepartnerships

Challenge Events Calendar

Why not challenge yourself to do something different in 2025, push yourself outside your comfort zone and make a real difference to animals in need!

Whether it's running, cycling, skydiving or walking, why not do it for Raystede and we will offer you support and guidance along the way.

If you'd like to take on a challenge, we have a wide variety of events available this year including:

- Brighton Marathon – 6 April
- London Marathon MyWay – 27 April
- 50 Miles in May – 1-31 May
- Wing Walking – 14 June

Check out the full list of events here:

■ www.raystede.org/challenge-events

Successful
wingwalkers



HOW YOU CAN HELP

Your fundraising efforts help hundreds of animals every year and we would love to hear from you if you would like to get involved. To find out more about fundraising for Raystede visit www.raystede.org/fundraise

How your fundraising helps Raystede



Covers the cost to care for one of our aviary birds for one week



Could pay for a rabbit to be vaccinated.



Helps us to feed one dog in our Kennels for a month.



Would enable us to look after one of the donkeys in our care for one week.



Could cover the cost to look after one of our horses or ponies for a month.



Pays for a Family Learning Day, teaching young people more about animal care.

All animals deserve to be safe and loved.
Your support makes this happen.

FRIENDS OF RAYSTEDE

70 years of friendship and support

Raystede has been fortunate to receive regular support from dedicated animal lovers who donate each month towards our work. Anybody can become a Friend – all you need is a shared love for the cause.

Friends of Raystede has been an integral part of Raystede for the last 70 years. The scheme was established by our founder, Miss Raymonde-Hawkins, three years after the charity was registered. Today, Friends of Raystede is one of the oldest Friends schemes of its kind in the UK.

"I had many friends who over the years had shared with me experiences in animal welfare, and these I circularised about my new venture in a 'home of my own for animals'. I had an immediate response of both moral support and warm friendship, and some financial aid from about a hundred friends."

"So I started off with a great deal of love and encouragement. Hundreds of friends came to start off this new Sussex centre for animal welfare, destined to develop more speedily than I had ever intended. From a family of three, the Friends of Raystede grew to forty in a single month, from forty to one hundred in two months, and from a hundred to the first thousand within the first year!"

Miss Raymonde-Hawkins

Raystede Founder



BECOME A FRIEND

Find out how to become a Friend of Raystede. Visit www.raystede.org/friends or call our Supporter Care Team on 01825 840 747.



Alex



Ronnie and Reggie

Friends Days

From just £8 a month, you can become a Friend of Raystede and help safeguard the future of animals in need.

As a way of saying thank you, our Friends of Raystede are invited to exclusive events twice a year. Recent Friends Days have included guided tours of the site packed full of information about the animals we care for, an activity to create enrichment boxes for the birds in our Aviaries, and talks about the horses, ponies and donkeys, many of whom live in sanctuary at Raystede. In 2025, we plan to focus on the Cattery, Kennels and Project Terrapin to give our Friends access to 'behind-the-scenes' areas and exclusive information from our Animal Care Teams.

Here's what one Friend said about a recent Friends Day:

"As usual all members of staff and volunteers were delightful, friendly, knowledgeable and informative. They all made us feel as if Raystede had been open for each one of us personally. Another delightful day and a further opportunity to help the animals."

LEAVE A LEGACY

You can help secure a future for the animals at Raystede

Leaving a gift in your Will is a wonderful way to help the causes you care about. Every gift, large or small, is special to Raystede. It will help us be here today and tomorrow, letting your love of animals live on.

Are you considering making a Will or amending a current one? An up-to-date Will gives you peace of mind that your loved ones will be cared for after you're gone. We've put together some commonly asked questions and answers on leaving a gift in a Will to Raystede.

I would like my gift to Raystede to be used in a specific way – is this possible?

Yes, gifts in Wills can be used in a specific way, but we would prefer to have the flexibility to use them wherever the need is greatest. If you would like your gift to be used for a particular area of our work, we would appreciate it if you could discuss your request with us before writing your Will. It would also be enormously helpful to us if your solicitor could express any specific requests as a 'wish', rather than a 'condition'.

Can I afford to remember Raystede in my Will?

Gifts in Wills don't have to be large – and you may be surprised by how much you actually have to leave. How much you choose to give is up to you, but large or small, every single gift we receive means we can help more animals at Raystede.

What can I leave to Raystede in my Will?

There are three main types of gift that you can leave in your Will. A **specific gift** is a particular item such as jewellery, a painting, an investment or even property.

A **pecuniary gift** is a specific sum of money, for example £2,000. Please note that the value of pecuniary gifts can decrease over time as the cost of living increases.

A **residuary gift** is a popular way of giving to a cause because it is a percentage or share of your estate, once you've provided for your loved ones and all debts, taxes and expenses have been taken care of. A residual gift is generally the most valuable as it keeps pace with inflation.



Timmy, Jeff and Mojo



How do I make provisions for my pet(s) after I'm gone?

We understand how worrying it can be not knowing what will happen to your pet should you outlive them. That's why, at Raystede, we offer a Lifetime of Love – a free service and a promise to take care of your animal when you no longer can.

If you wish to include your cat, dog or other small animal in the Lifetime of Love scheme, please visit www.raystede.org/lifetime-of-love or call 01825 627086.

Is a gift in my Will affected by inheritance tax?

Any gift made in your Will to Raystede is exempt from tax and could even reduce the inheritance tax liability for your loved ones if your estate is over the inheritance tax threshold. We recommend that you speak to an independent financial advisor or your solicitor about the tax implications of your estate.

How do I find a solicitor?

You can use any solicitor you prefer or use one of our free Will writing services listed on our website.

How can you write or update your Will for free?

You can do this in person, via The National Free Wills Network, who will provide you with a list of your six closest participating solicitors, so you can arrange an appointment to suit you.

If you would prefer to write your Will online, Bequeathed will provide the template for you to complete at home and the draft will be transferred to an accredited legal firm for review.

Here's why Mary and her husband decided to leave a gift in their Will to Raystede

"Over the passage of time, Raystede has always been a place dear in our hearts. The most wonderful team of people who care and look after an even more wonderful and amazing menagerie of animals.

From our first visit in the mid-1970s we have watched Raystede expand into what it is today. We have also become enveloped in the warmth and compassion of Peaceways. Jeff has looked after many of our furry family members with such love and devotion, as well as supplying a strong shoulder for us to cry on.

It is a combination of all these things which has made us want to leave a gift in our Will, to make sure the future is bright for all animals who come into the care of Raystede. Their continued growth is our legacy to you all."

bequeathed
make your Will For Good

NATIONAL
FREE WILLS
NETWORK



HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you have any questions regarding leaving a legacy, please visit www.raystede.org/legacy, contact our Legacy Team on 01825 627086 or email legacy@raystede.org.

VOLUNTEERING

Richard

Volunteers are vital to our work

Raystede now has over 300 volunteers supporting our vital work. From fostering and gardening to helping in our charity shops as well as assisting visitors to find their way, the jobs can be varied. Three of our volunteers share their experience.

Mike and Karen

"We volunteered at Raystede for the 'Big Help Out' last June. We had a fun day clearing the tortoise area of weeds and tidying the overgrown herb bed with 'Team Tortoise'! After that we applied as volunteers in the Estates Team as we enjoy gardening.

We work Wednesdays doing a variety of tasks including clearing flower beds, pruning trees, removing harmful weeds and brambles, plus generally keeping the site tidy and safe for the animals and visitors.

We enjoy our varied and worthwhile shifts, while learning new skills as we go. The complimentary lunch and hot drinks are most welcome too!"

Mike and Karen



Richard

"In 2021, my partner and I fostered a Siamese cat called Bozie from Raystede for three months. The time passed very quickly and at the end, Raystede staff collected him for adoption.

We hadn't realised how much an impact losing him would have. A week later, Raystede contacted us and asked if we could look after him again as COVID had prevented him from being adopted. We told the staff it would be too traumatic to lose him twice. So we adopted him ourselves! He is a wonderful cat and very, very spoiled.

A year later, retirement brought a new opportunity for living a different life. I felt I wanted to give something back to Raystede for providing us with Bozie and I saw that they were looking for volunteers. I've been working here for one day a week for over 18 months now.

I do home visits for the Rehoming Team to assess the foster placements that the cats, dogs and rabbits are temporarily rehomed to. I love supporting the team here. The staff, the volunteers and the managers are among the nicest people I have ever worked with and their commitment to the care and guardianship of animals is exceptional.

Being a volunteer, like my work life, still requires me to apply myself to making sure my part in the daily operations goes without any hitches. Small as my part is, there is a real feeling of belonging and common purpose working here."

LEGAL

Have you heard of a 'pet-nup'?

We've all heard of pre-nups to protect assets but what about protecting pets? Family law solicitor, Linda Lamb, explains more about how considering a 'pet-nup' can help reduce the stress for our pets in the event of a relationship ending.

Pet lovers see their pets as family members. My labrador Una is always by my side. Sadly, when relationships come to an end, whether through divorce, dissolution, or separation of cohabiting partners, 'where the pets will live' can cause great pain to both partners, as well as for any children involved. In family law, a strong focus is on finding ways to avoid conflict, by proactively anticipating potential issues that may arise.

We all enter relationships with love in our eyes, but often little consideration is given to what should happen if the relationship comes to an end. Many are familiar with prenuptial agreements – legal contracts between two individuals designed to address potential challenges that may arise during a separation. For couples who are not planning to marry or enter a civil partnership, there are cohabitation agreements. These not only cover financial matters, but increasingly, also include a 'pet-nup', which outlines arrangements for pets in the event of a separation.

Deciding on the future of a beloved pet can be challenging and when you welcome a new pet into your home there are many circumstances that could be unforeseen. It's important to ensure your pet-nup includes review clauses to accommodate any changes that may arise over time, such as the arrival of children, chronic illness, or a pet's attachment to a particular individual. These factors can be reconsidered when the agreement is reviewed.

It is often suggested that these written agreements are not romantic. My view, these agreements should be seen similarly to an insurance policy. You will likely never need to use them, but having a 'just in case' plan is crucial. With cats living for 15-20 years, dogs typically reaching 10-15 years, and other beloved pets like birds, rabbits, and tortoises having life spans ranging from 5 to upwards of 80 years, a pet-nup provides a framework for ensuring their care and well-being, no matter what the future holds.

It also ensures that if the relationship ends, it can be managed in the most positive way, minimising anxiety for the couple, reducing stress for the pets, and, for parents, fostering a co-parenting approach that benefits the children.

Linda Lamb and Una



HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you would like to find out about volunteering opportunities at Raystede, visit www.raystede.org/volunteer. We are always on the lookout for people who can share their time and contribute to the vital work we do.

HOW WE CAN HELP

We believe that the better-informed people are about animals and how to care for them, the happier they and their pets will be. From pet advice events to animal care guides, our website is a great source of information designed to help people make informed decisions about their animal or about pet ownership.



SHOPPING

New shop opening: Hello Eastbourne!

Our charity shops offer a cornucopia of pre-loved treasures. They also provide a vital income stream for the ongoing care we provide for animals at Raystede.



Karen

Our charity shops are going from strength to strength, providing local people with the opportunity to grab a bargain, recycle pre-loved items and support animals at Raystede.

Aside from the charity shop on site at Ringmer, we also have three other thriving shops in Lewes, Uckfield and Hailsham. And now, we are opening a brand new shop in the Langney Shopping Centre, Eastbourne, which will be our fourth shop on the high street.

The new charity shop will be opening to the public in February. Opening hours will be 9am – 4.45pm from Monday to Saturday and 10am – 4pm on Sundays.

If you are local, do pop in and see all the wonderful items on sale. You can also meet our friendly team, Karen (Store Manager), Vanessa, Peter and Carol.

DON'T FORGET TO DONATE YOUR UNWANTED ITEMS

We are always happy to accept good quality, saleable donations at our charity shops.

Items we accept:

- ✓ Clean clothes- women's, men's and children's
- ✓ Accessories, jewellery, hats and scarves and more...
- ✓ Ornaments ✓ Bric-a-brac
- ✓ Books ✓ Small electrical items, such as kettles, lamps

For a full list of items that we can and cannot accept at our Raystede charity shops, please visit:

www.raystede.org/shop/donate-goods/

"As an animal lover, I'm so pleased to be working at the new Raystede charity shop in Langney. Giving pre-loved items new homes, means that we can help even more animals find their new homes."

"We've been working hard to make our shop as lovely as can be. With hidden treasures and new bargains every day, there will be something for everyone!"

Karen, Store Manager, Langney Shopping Centre, Eastbourne.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Are you a super sales person, a fashion fan or a marvellous merchandiser? If you've got time to give and you are happy to volunteer, then our new charity shop needs you.

Could you be our next charity shop superstar?

Roles include:

- Customer service
- Operating the till
- Sorting and prepping donated stock

Visit www.raystede.org/volunteer for more information.

PEACEWAYS

"This is part of my life. I love what I do here, and it's very dear to me."

Last December, Jeff Tucker celebrated his 15th year as the manager of Peaceways – Raystede's dedicated pet crematorium. Here he tells us why Peaceways is such a special place.

The Peaceways pet crematorium has been helping people and their beloved pets since 1964, when Miss Raymonde-Hawkins, the founder of Raystede, opened it just a short distance away from the centre. It was the first dedicated pet crematorium in the country. A small business then, her next door neighbour, Mr Pedder, was always on call and used to manage the cremations. After Mr Pedder sadly passed away, I saw a job advertised in the Friday ads for a new pet crematorium manager. I had just been made redundant from my job working at the flower market in Covent Garden and I was looking for something completely different, and in the charity sector, so, intrigued by the position, I applied for it. And here I am, 15 years later!

In that time we have focused on ways to truly help and support grieving pet owners when they need us. Peaceways has grown from being a small ad hoc service, to what it is today; we operate seven days a week and do whatever we can to help, we truly care about all the pets we look after, as if they were our own. With the help in more recent years of two wonderful members of staff, Steve and Sara, we guide and support people through the difficult experience of losing a pet with care and sensitivity. It's very private and personal.

The first phone call to us is very important as it's a very sensitive moment. We're here to listen, give advice, and explain options, even if it means signposting to another service if that's what is right for them. We help people make arrangements for their final farewell in their own time. Some people like to come and look around Peaceways first, and when they do so, they are often struck by the peacefulness of the beautiful rose garden of remembrance, woodland walk and the great many birds coming down to land on the bird tables.

We have a lovely little chapel of rest where they can lay their pets to rest and spend some private, quiet time saying goodbye. Open every day, we see many people come back to visit the gardens, reflecting on their lost loved ones, and we see lots of families here throughout the year, some gathering on the anniversary of when they lost their pet. Many also choose to visit at Christmas to remember.

I'm very proud of the service and support we are able to provide, saying goodbye to a loved one is such an incredibly sad time, and it is a privilege to be here helping people when they need us. Peaceways is very dear to me, and when you're passionate about something as I am about Peaceways, it's not a job, it's a vocation.



Sara,
Jeff and
Steve

HOW YOU CAN HELP

If you think you could donate items or your time to one of the Raystede charity shops, please visit us at www.raystede.org/shop/ for more information.

MORE INFO

If you'd like to know more about Peaceways, get in touch with Jeff, Steve or Sara at www.peaceways.co.uk

EDUCATION

A Terrapin's Tale

Our free Family Learning Days, held during half term and school holidays, are always a success. Families can explore our centre and take part in a range of educational activities.

During last summer's Family Learning Days, we celebrated our new terrapin sanctuary, the only one of its kind in the south of England.

Over 2,000 people came along to see the fabulous new facility. They were able to walk through the sanctuary, learn about these exotic creatures, and enjoy the sight of them settling into their forever home.

It was wonderful to see families completing our Terrapin's Tale Trail, following the fictitious story of Terry the terrapin en route to his new life at Raystede, from being imported into the UK as a hatchling to being sold in a pet shop. Then being illegally released into a lake after outgrowing his tank, to struggling to survive because he couldn't swim properly.

Thankfully, as visitors were informed, Terry was rescued and brought to Raystede where he was given swimming lessons in isolation, before taking up residency in our sanctuary with other rescued terrapins.

Having completed the trail and learning about Terry's traumatic experience (which is common for many terrapins), the sight of so many rescues basking on the beach and logs in the summer sunshine had a real impact on our visitors.

Passing on terrapin knowledge

In addition to enjoying the views and engaging in some terrapin spotting, visitors had the opportunity to talk to experts from Turtle Tally – an educational organisation that collects turtle data – who supported the events.

Paul Eversfield from Turtle Tally said: *"The terrapin issue has been a manifest problem here in the UK for several decades, and it is clear that to mitigate this, education is key. This education is both informative and graphically illustrated during a visit to Raystede. The days thronged with public all keen to follow the journey of Terry the terrapin."*

During the autumn and winter, our current population of around 90 terrapins gradually slow down and reduce their food intake, before going into their brumation (a natural state of inactivity that enables terrapins to survive our cold temperatures) at the bottom of the lake.

We look forward to seeing them back and basking in springtime, ready to enjoy their first full year of sanctuary life.



Turtle Tally Team



Brush up on your pet's oral hygiene with our dental care Q&A

You can often find members of the Raystede Education Team out in the community at our free pet-advice pop ups. Veterinary Nurse, Maria Steel, shares her advice on preventative dental healthcare for pets.

Q: My elderly dog/cat's breath smells. Is there anything I can do about this?

A: Ideally, every elderly pet should have an annual veterinary health check to ensure they remain comfortable and pain-free in their senior years. Smelly breath could be a sign of tartar build up on the teeth, a loose or decaying tooth, or another medical problem that may need further investigation.

Q: The vet has checked my pet and diagnosed some tartar build up and has suggested a dental at some point in the future. What can I do now to help my pet?

A: Regular tooth brushing is best using a pet enzymatic toothpaste which is suitable for both cats and dogs – do not use human toothpaste as it can be poisonous for your pets.

At our pop-up pet advice events we can demonstrate how to do this in a positive way and provide you with our step-by-step guide on toothbrushing.

Q: My dog or cat hates the toothbrush! Can we do anything else?

A: Yes. Anything that promotes chewing has a natural tooth brushing effect on the teeth. Toys such as Kongs, dental toys, rope toys and natural chews (not rawhide) are great for dogs. For cats, try dental cat toys and natural chews.

Also enzymatic pet tooth gel is designed to be applied to your pet's teeth without the need to brush. If you apply it with your finger daily it may help reduce plaque and freshen breath. Pet plaque remover can also be added to your pet's food and drinking water.

Q: What about other small animals, such as rabbits? Should we brush their teeth too?

A: No. Following guidelines on recommended diets for animals will help keep them healthy and encourage constant chewing to help wear down the teeth naturally. Rabbits and other small pets are really good at hiding their discomfort, so we advise checking their teeth on a regular basis.



DID YOU KNOW?

Plaque is the buildup of bacteria, saliva and food debris. If not removed in 24 hours it will develop into tartar, which can lead to gum disease, tooth loss and also have an effect on internal organs such as the liver, kidneys and heart.

We advise gentle early toothbrushing starting from three months old.

Dogs and cats can show signs of gum disease and dental problems from three years of age.



BOOK NOW

To learn more about our Family Learning Days in 2025 and how to book tickets, visit www.raystede.org/family-learning-days

MORE INFO

If you'd like to come along to one of our pop-up pet advice events, visit www.raystede.org/pop-up-pet-advice/ for dates and locations in your area.



Atlas and Ocean

FOREVER HOMES

Here are some Raystede animals that have found their happily ever after.

Atlas and Ocean

"Atlas and Ocean are doing very well. They are enjoying lots of good food including fresh hay with some willow and apple sticks to chew on which they like very much. They sit on their mini balcony and listen to the sounds of the countryside which is interesting to see. They like chew toys and have little cuddles now and then."

Frida

"We adopted Frida in November 2024 and she quickly chose her comfort spots at home and now enjoys relaxing. She loves watching TV and is a particular fan of Columbo! She fills the house with love and makes our house feel like a home again."

Lemon and Herb

"We are so utterly besotted with Lemon and Herb and are so happy with how they have settled in."

We are so enjoying getting to know their unique personalities - they both have their favourite veggies, favourite spots and different ways of interacting! We have already given them an extension on their enclosure as they so love running around and exploring. It feels weird to remember a time before we adopted the boys, they are part of the family and we adore them."



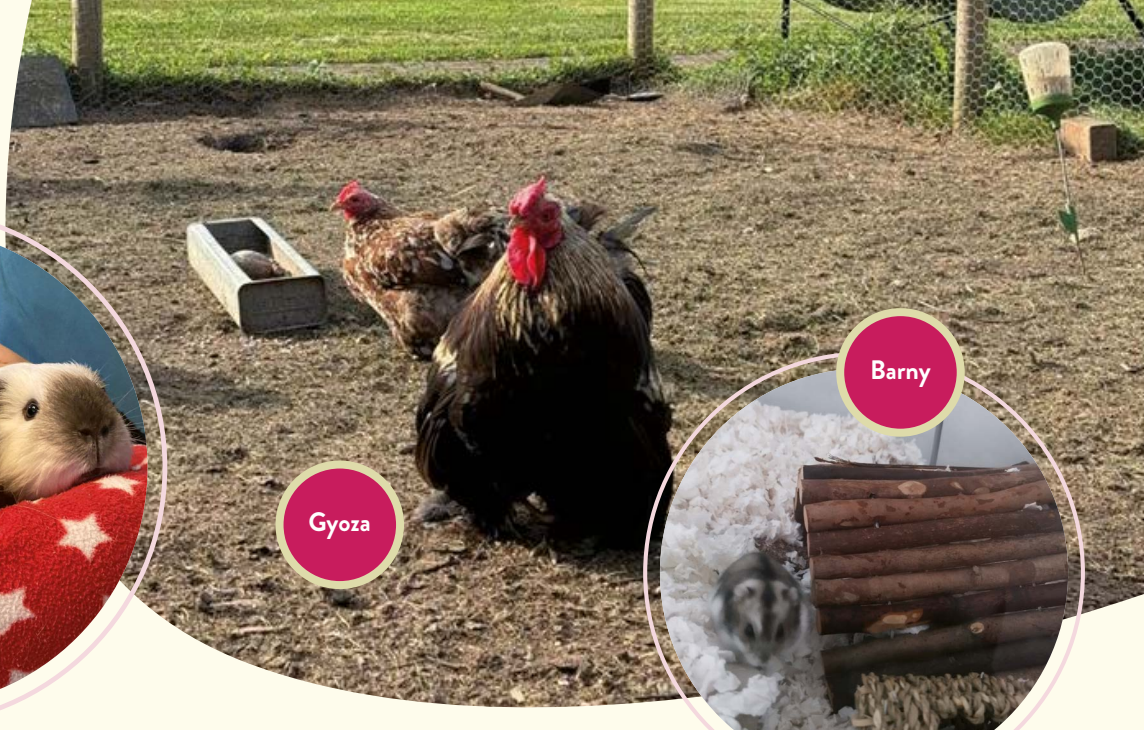
Frida



Lemon and Herb



Scotch and Smudge



Gyoza



Barney

Scotch

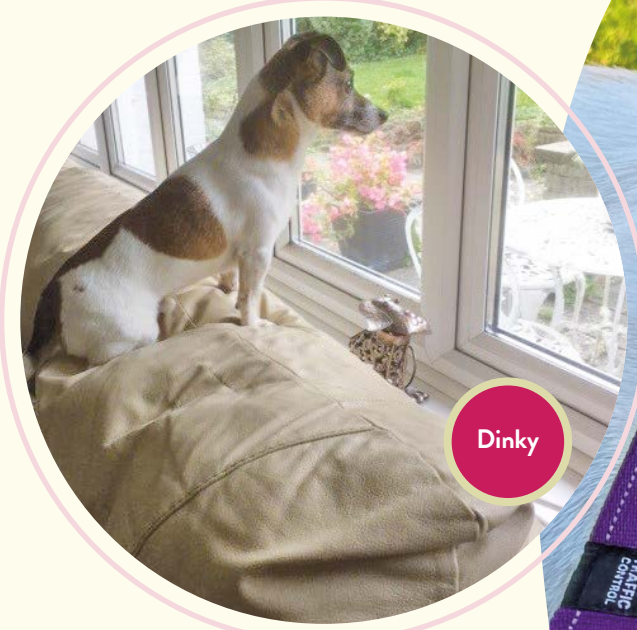
"Scotch (now called Mr Chips) really is an absolute perfect match for Smudge. They are both absolute menaces and spend their entire day tearing around at top speed, bouncing all over the place and making more mess than I thought possible. Smudge has previously always been with older piggies so it's nice she finally has someone who can keep up with her! We really like him, and it makes us so happy that they like each other so much!"

Gyoza

"We rehomed a cockerel named Gyoza after losing our previous one, and our hens were really missing a male presence! Gyoza is absolutely lovely and has settled in perfectly with the girls. The description of his personality (and crow!) was spot on. I can't recommend Raystede enough and look forward to rehoming more animals from them in the future."

Dinky

"He is absolutely fantastically gorgeous! We love him to pieces! Thank you so very much for allowing him to live with us."



Dinky

Barney

"He has settled in fabulously and is now called Barnaby (Barney) which I think suits his friendliness very well! He loves exploring and has been having some veg which he often sits on my hand to eat. He's amazingly curious and is interested as soon as I start to talk to him when he appears about 8pm, coming up to the glass, a very bold character."

Fern

"Made herself completely at home and is making new friends (human and doggy). She is such an affectionate girl and loves her cuddles and fuss."



Fern



Become a Friend of Raystede

From £8 a month, you could help secure the future for Raystede's rescued animals.

Join one of the oldest Friends schemes of its kind in the UK with a monthly gift that will help rescue, rehabilitate, rehome and provide lifelong sanctuary to thousands of injured and abandoned animals in need.

As a Friend of Raystede you will receive:

- 🐾 Invitations to exclusive behind-the-scenes Friends events
- 🐾 Raystede Magazine
- 🐾 Raystede Pet Care Guide

Founder,
Miss Raymonde-Hawkins,
who set up Friends of
Raystede.



Become a Friend of Raystede and help us be there for animals today, tomorrow and in the future.

Find out more www.raystede.org/friends
or call **01825 840747**.