Rodent Adoption FAQs

How do I adopt?

Adopting a small animal is extremely rewarding but is also a big commitment. Each animal has their own individual and specific needs, so it’s very important that you understand and meet their individual requirements.

All our small animals available for rehoming are listed on our website with a detailed description of their characteristics and needs, so you can see if you think any may be a suitable match for you. The website is updated regularly with new arrivals, so don’t worry if you haven’t spotted a potential match just yet!

All visits to Raystede to adopt or give up an animal are by appointment only. We accept online applications to adopt an animal and will consider reserves, introductions, and adoptions on a case-by-case basis. Due to the high volume of enquiries being received we are not currently able to respond immediately to every application we receive.

**Step 1**: **Submit your application form**

Tell us about your home, lifestyle, experience, and the type of animal you are hoping to share your life with.

Due to the high volume of enquiries we receive, we regret that we are not able to respond to every application but please be assured we have your details.

**Step 2**: **Don’t be a stranger**

Once you have registered with us, please keep an eye on our website for new arrivals.

If you spot an animal that you think may be a suitable match, there is no need to submit another application. Please contact us directly to highlight your interest by emailing info@raystede.org or by calling 01825 880468.

When animals arrive at Raystede, we get to know them through behaviour and medical assessments. Our expert animal care teams carefully use this information alongside your application to see if the match could be a success.

**Step 3: A meet & greet invitation**

You will be invited to Raystede to meet any animals who might suit your home. We will discuss the animal's background, health, and behaviour. This sometimes requires a few visits. Please note that booking a visitor ticket to Raystede does not enable you to meet an animal you are interested in adopting.

What species of rodent do you have available for adoption?

* Guinea pigs – link to care guide
* Chinchillas
* Rats
* Degus
* Gerbils
* Hamsters
* Mice

What are your housing requirements?

We have varying size requirements for each species, please click on the below links for more information. These requirements are in place to ensure the highest welfare standards. If your enclosure doesn’t meet our requirements, please speak to the Small Animals Team who be happy to advise on ways to modify it.

What are the adoption fees?

* Guinea pigs: £20
* Chinchillas: £30
* Degus: £10
* Rats: £15
* Gerbils/Hamsters/Mice: £5

Do you help with bonding?

Yes, we offer an on-site bonding service for most rodent species. The process varies slightly between the different species but involves your animal coming to Raystede to stay for a short time whilst we introduce them in a neutral environment with staff supervision. Once we are happy that they have bonded we will arrange for you to collect your animal and their new companion.

Can I adopt a single rodent?

Most of our rodent species are social animals and will only be rehomed in pairs, groups, or as companions for an existing owned small animal. The exception to this is Syrian and some dwarf hamsters who are best kept on their own.

Do you rehome rodents to homes with young children?

Yes, although we do ask that there is a responsible adult who will be the main carer of the animals. A lot of small animals come into our care because children in their previous home lost interest in them and we are keen to avoid this happening again.

Do you sell enclosures at Raystede?

Unfortunately, we aren’t able to supply enclosures and ask that you have this set up before taking your new companion home. Our Small Animals Team are happy to advise on how to create a suitable enclosure and how to set them up with safe enrichment and substrate.

I already have a dog/cat at home, can I adopt small animals?

Yes, we would just ask that any enclosures are kept out of reach of nosey dogs or curious cats. Whilst your dog/cat might be calm and respectful around small animals, it can be very stressful for a prey animal to be living so close to a predator. We will advise on whether the animals you are interested in can be kept in a home with dogs/cats.