

CEO: Stephanie Smith



Stephanie and Jasper

Dear everyone,

I was reading through some of my CEO staff newsletter and supporter magazine messages and it struck me that they sometimes have quite a depressing and moany tone – I’m sorry about that, there has been a lot to worry and moan about over the past couple of years. I really love working at Raystede and so I now pledge to be more upbeat, starting here. There have been lots of positive things to celebrate and below are just some of the ones that I have most admired and enjoyed over the past 3-4 months, in no particular order (and *not* an exhaustive list).

There are more exciting projects and activities coming up and just thinking about them and how amazing you all are has really lifted my spirits!

- Jon’s RED Talk on the new Avian Flu housing was fascinating and entertaining, thank you.
- Signing the lease for the new shops in Uckfield and Hailsham.
- 50 staff attending a Staff Forum in March and we still did it in half an hour.
- Getting planning permission for the terrapin project to go ahead.
- Lewes shop and eBay beating the annual target 2 months early!
- The fabulous new eBay space.

- Welcoming Diane Bate, our new Head of Finance & Resources.
- Talking to St Leonards Rotary Club and making lots of great new contacts.
- Rehoming figures for February!
- Meeting the Education volunteers for lunch.
- The fabulous Tack sale.
- I have shown about 12 different groups of people round the site. I most enjoyed the tour where the guests gave me £1,000 at the end!

- Raystede trying out Rehoming Information Mornings.
- Confirming new non-pay benefits for staff and finding out that nearly 4,000 bowls of free soup have been served!



Together, everyone at Raystede, Peaceways and Lewes has achieved so much during the past few months – a big thank to you all for everything you have done.

Every day, I see how hard you all work for the animals in our care, you really do go the extra mile! I hope this informal newsletter helps us all to keep in touch.

Please look after yourselves, your family and friends. Thank you again to all staff and volunteers for your dedication and commitment to Raystede.

Stephanie Smith, CEO

In this issue

- New Head of Finance & Resources
- Q&A with Chair of Trustees
- Farewell to Bob our alpaca
- Rehoming success stories
- New shop in Uckfield
- Raystede's Patron - in - Chief
- Summer Sizzlers

Welcome to our Patron-in-Chief



Mr Andrew Blackman says:

"I am delighted to join Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare as its Patron-in-Chief, and to support their efforts to alleviate animal cruelty and provide sanctuary to, or rehome a wide range of animals in need. The staff and volunteers have provided a lifeline to vulnerable animals for over 70 years, and I look forward to championing their continued success as Patron-in-Chief."

We are delighted to announce that The Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex, Mr Andrew Blackman, has been appointed Patron-in-Chief for Raystede.

Mr Blackman first visited Raystede in May 2022 to celebrate her late Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and our own 70th anniversary. During his visit, he met staff and volunteers and planted an English Oak tree as part of the celebrations and the Queen's Green Canopy to plant a million trees in a living and lasting legacy to her.

Stephanie Smith, CEO, says:

"We are very proud that the Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex has agreed to become our Patron-in-Chief. It was such a pleasure to welcome him to Raystede last year, to see his love of animals and his interest in and support for our work.

We are all really looking forward to working with him to help more animals in our local community."

Andrew Blackman was appointed to be His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for East Sussex on 18 August 2021.

Andrew Blackman is a former art dealer who has previously served as High Sheriff.

He was an Ambassador for the Sussex Community Foundation; a committee member of the Order of St Richard, which recognises the contribution of lay people in the service of the church; a former Chair of the Friends of Hastings Country Park; and a former trustee of the Peasmarch Chamber Music Festival. He has also sat on the Board of Appeals for St Michael's Hospice and the Conquest Hospital. Mr Blackman lives in Fairlight, near Hastings, with his husband Richard Smith.



The Lord Lieutenant's visit to Raystede in May 2022

Animal Welfare: Matt Gough



New terrapin location

Spring just about feels to be in the air and looking into my crystal ball at the rest of 2023, I'm feeling quite positive. Rehoming of cats and small animals in particular has rebounded to a good level and it is starting to feel like people have begun to settle into the new social landscape brought by the cost-of-living crisis. Hopefully, that will mean people feel better prepared to give homes to rescue animals including more of our dogs as the months go by.

All being well, you should see increased activity around the site of the terrapin project in the coming weeks. We have just received planning permission so it will be full steam ahead. You might have noticed some small trees and scrub being removed from around the site which was necessary to clear the area for new fencing to be installed. At the same time, you may also have noticed the Estates Team planting new hedgerows with volunteer groups in the double fenced areas at the edge of some of the equine paddocks. These were planted to provide browse for the animals as they grow through the fences, create natural windbreaks, and to be of benefit to wildlife. That means that although we have lost a handful of immature trees in the Sanctuary, they have been replaced by many hundreds of trees elsewhere on site.

Thank you all for your continued support, here's hoping 2023 will be a much more positive year for animals.

Rehoming: Miriam Dowding

It's busy in Rehoming for surrender requests at the moment. We were asked to take 121 dogs in January, compared with 63 in January 2022. Break Away is still quiet, but we recently had a cat called Belle join the scheme and she is doing well in her foster home.

We have recently recruited four new casual Multi-Section Animal Care Assistants (MSACA): Olive, Sharon, Sapphire, and Amanda. Charlotte - a new full time MSACA started with us in March.



Bubbles' kittens

Call for kitten foster carers

We are currently on the lookout for more kitten foster carers who are able to raise and socialise kittens.

If you know of anyone who might be suitable, please direct them to our website.

Thanks

Miriam

Vickie Gorst: Small Animals

Tortoises awake!

When you are on the Small Animals Team, you know that Spring has arrived when the tortoises wake up from hibernation.

All our tortoises have made it through another winter safely and have even had the opportunity to make their first outings of the year into their gardens. Once the warmer weather arrives, they will be allowed outside more often to graze and enjoy the natural sunshine.



Yum yum yum!



Baby bunny!

Rabbits

There is a nationwide crisis with unwanted rabbits and we are currently overflowing with them, but the team didn't hesitate when we were asked to help with an out-of-control breeding situation. We have welcomed seven giant breed bunnies which consist of a mum, her female companion and five 3 week-old babies!

Baby rabbits don't stay babies for long so we are making the most of their cuteness.

If you can't find any of the WFS team that is where we will be! This takes our total number of bunnies on site to 28.



Avian haven

Avian Havens

You may have passed our new avian flu enclosures within the sanctuary areas during your wanders around the site or on our RED talks. Three permanent structures were built as avian flu is now becoming a yearly and potentially fatal threat, the structures protect our poultry and waterfowl from wild birds as cross contamination can occur from sharing food and water sources or contact with infected droppings.

The permanent enclosures have made life much easier for the team; after our WFS-built enclosures collapsed during Storm Eunice last year, we discovered that none of us are keen architects!

Good News!

Although we have been extremely busy over the last few months, we have had a lot of rehoming successes which have seen all our mice being rehomed (this time last year we had over 30) and all but two of the 38 hoarder guinea pigs from last year have been rehomed.

Aviaries: Sarah Gorringe



Olly upside down!

Thankfully, in some ways there are few things to report for this newsletter. Touch wood, most things are relatively calm.

We have some parrots feeling rather broody though. Some have laid eggs and some are using a toy, such as a small ball or a Lego cube to sit on. This is creating behavioural issues for the staff in some cases, but generally we are managing them OK and getting our cleaning done.

Thankfully, we have a working pump again, which is a godsend as we have suffered physically having to go back to basics lugging water containers, buckets and watering cans around to clean and provide drinking water. I am sure we will gradually recover but we have all been feeling the strain one way or another, so we are very grateful as we had six weeks of it!

We have had some work done to try to deal with rainwater getting indoors in the African Grey colony aviary, but the drainpipes added have made no difference, so back to the drawing board I'm afraid, which is very frustrating. During heavy rain and strong winds, it has been quite depressing for this group as they try to find a dry area to roost - somehow the water is getting in somewhere.

Well, the days are getting longer and we are trying to feel a little more optimistic. Olly has taken to looking at the world from a different perspective, so we wanted to add this photo for all to see! What a superstar he is!

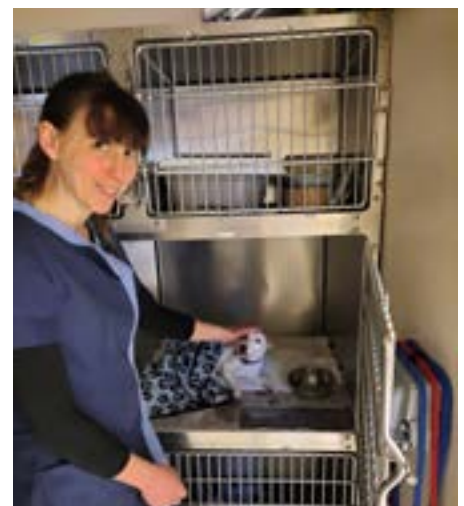
Surgery: Alice Hasell

We have been busy neutering here in the surgery. We have now had all of Pixie's puppies from the summer in to be neutered, all seemed very settled and happy with their owners.

In February we had a busy couple of days neutering external cats, six boys and five girls in total, on top of the Raystede animals made for a busy week and we look forward to the next day in the winter.

Looking forward, we have a cat microchip day coming up again in April, helping people who cannot afford to get their cats microchipped privately. Onsite, the neutering of rabbits who came in in December is keeping us busy. Hopefully they will all find homes soon.

Thanks.
Alice & Jane



Alice and one of the Disney pups!

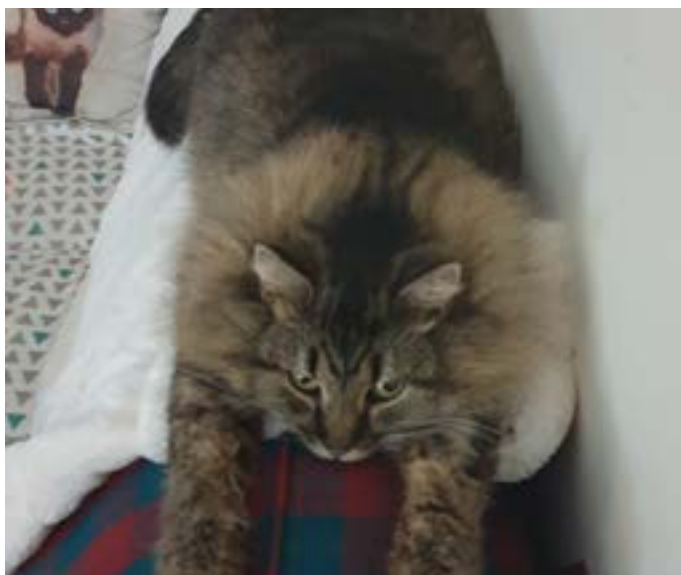
Cattery: Amber Tipler



Dilly

Kitten season came early for us this year. At the time of writing, we have three queens with litters of varying sizes, and one pregnant cat who we are eagerly waiting on to give birth. Georgie, a stray long-haired tabby, who we took in gave birth to two kittens on 28 February. Sadly, one of the kittens didn't make it, so her remaining baby, who we have named Dilly, is absolutely thriving as she has the monopoly on the milk bar! She's also living up to the tortoiseshell trait of being spicy – she was hissing at us before she was even a week old!

Also born on 28 February were Bubbles' three kittens. Bubbles, her kittens, and her two sisters, Blossom and Buttercup, are all currently living out in the Enrichment Room and enjoying the freedom of having the space to dash around and play (see picture on page three).



Rosie

The Enrichment Room is functioning as a temporary 'Maternity Ward' while we wait for more kitten foster carers to be recruited.

Brother and sister pair, Queenie and Luigi, came to us unneutered and at one year old, you can guess how that ended! Queenie gave birth to four healthy kittens on 8 March. We are hoping to send the proud parents and the four babies to foster soon. They will stay in foster until the kittens are around eight weeks old. This is when they are ready to leave their mum, be vaccinated, microchipped and find their new homes. The kittens come back to us for their neuter operations at around 12 weeks old.

Jessie is keeping us all waiting to see when she will give birth to her litter. She had an ultrasound with Alice and we saw a kitten spine, skull and heart. It was tricky to get a clear picture of how many she will have as we didn't want to shave Jessie's fur just for the purpose of the ultrasound. So, we are taking bets!

We are also very busy with adult and senior cats, many of whom are finding their forever homes in good time. Our current longest stays are Rosie and Petra, 15 year old sisters, who have been with us since November.

The girls are spending time in a foster home while they wait for their perfect person to come along. As you can see from the photos, they are absolutely loving having all the home comforts they desire.



Petra

Kennels: Val Suleski



Coco

Coco has also gone home now; she has a quirky character so is still training her new family to her ways, however they adore her.

Elder continues to do well in his new home, proving he has retained his learning and been able to transfer this to the outside world, we are so proud of him!

Rocky the hound is settling in well too and continuing his training, the couple are enjoying having such a social dog.

STAR dogs, Stanley and Ruby, are still with us and are joined on the STAR dog webpage by Quinn and Toby, both of whom have more specific needs relating to finding the right home.

We continue to receive high numbers of surrender requests. Whilst take up of advice to help people keep their dogs is low, we have had feedback from several that they have managed to place their dogs via specific or breed rescue organisations we have signposted them to.

The range of characters in the kennels keeps us busy and we have had several requiring extra support to regain their physical health too, like the handsome old boy, Sky, who was very sore due to arthritis and arrived with a very smelly and matted coat, now feeling and looking great with a spring in his step and a new enjoyment of life.

We're getting our sensory garden ready so the dogs will have an area to self-select plants to smell and grass to eat that targets a need they have relating to their physical or emotional well-being.

Anyone with tips for herb growing and care please do share your knowledge as this is a new one for us - to the point that we just realised we forgot to buy any actual tools to plant them with!

Thanks.

Val



Elder



Sky

Alice Champion: Equine



Bob

Bob - sad news

Very sadly, Bob passed away on the night of 1 March. After a choking incident, Bob, unfortunately, aspirated which was to be expected after foreign substances entered the airways or lungs. As a result of this, the lung tissue became damaged. Despite our best efforts working alongside the vets giving Bob antibiotics, painkillers, and steroids, it just wasn't enough.

The whole team spent hours of their days sitting with Bob trying to get him to eat, but due to Bob being a very sensitive and independent alpaca that didn't like human interaction, this was very difficult for him. We can just be thankful that he is out of pain and in a better place.



Whizz

Whizz's arrival

Whizz is the newest member of the Equine Team, having arrived here with us in December 2022. He had been with his previous owners for the past ten years but due to a change of circumstances and loss of land, he needed to be rehomed. He is a Welsh pony who is 22 years young. He is very sweet-natured and will stand all day being groomed without making a fuss. You will currently find him mixing with our pony herd.

Whizz is out in the field overnight with Sally, Pixie, Oscar and Saul however, he cannot be turned out with Cherry or Purdie as he gets too excited. No health issues have been discovered with Whizz, indicating he is happy and healthy. Thus, suggesting he is ready for his forever home to love him as much as we do.

Lovely Sweetie, Timothy and Ewen being rehomed

The white Wiltshire Long Horn boys have been rehomed to a lovely personal smallholding just down the road in Chiddingly. It is so amazing that we managed to get these boys a home due to them still being so young and the rest of our flock being elderly. It allows them to have a full enriched life with a flock closer to them in age. They are now happily living with five other sheep and a goat called Millie.



Charlotte

Charlotte the sheep's arrival

Charlotte is a six year-old Ryeland sheep that is the newest member of our flock. She was signed over to us due to the sad loss of her companion. She is currently living with the three cottage loaves as they have a slower lifestyle that is better suited to Charlotte. She is very needy and loves a fuss. Before she came to us, her owner had her living in the lounge as that was the only place she would settle. We were extremely careful not to play to this too much so we could allow her to live like a sheep again and stand on her own four feet. Charlotte has made new friends since coming to live at Raystede, had her vaccinations, been wormed and had her feet trimmed and dipped.

Trustee Board: News and information

Q&A with Derwyn Jones, Chair of Trustees

Derwyn Jones joined Raystede in June 2022 as Chair and Trustee, these are both volunteer roles. He worked for many years in global corporations before setting up his own business where he advises a wide range of companies on strategic planning, cost control, fundraising and operational efficiencies. He has had Border Collies all his life and can be seen most days walking on the South Downs with Alfie.

We caught up with Derwyn recently to get his impressions of his first few months at Raystede.

Q: How have you found your first few months?

A: *It has been an interesting and humbling first six months. We have the most amazing people working for us, including all the volunteers who give up their time to help us provide a better life for all the animals we look after. It's also been a steep learning curve for me getting to understand what everyone does and trying to remember everyone's name.*



Derwyn

Q: What have you learned about or from Raystede that has particularly surprised and delighted you?

A: *The importance of education when choosing and looking after your animals. As a dog owner I have always been aware of what it takes to look after an animal, but through talking with the Education Team, I have realised even more the need for us to build awareness with the public on the responsibility of owning an animal.*

Q: What do you think are the challenges facing Raystede at the moment?

A: *Raystede relies entirely on the generosity of our supporters and without their kind donations we would not be able to provide the care that we do. These donations will continue to be very important to us and, at a time when we know many people are facing their own financial challenges, we must continue to raise awareness of the great work that we do and the need for their much-needed support.*

Q: What are your hopes for the future for Raystede?

A: *The needs and requirements in animal welfare will continue to change and we need to ensure that as an organisation we change with them to ensure that we are doing what is best for the animals we look after. I want Raystede to be recognised even more than we are at the moment for all the great work that we do, and to continue to be a place where everyone loves to work. I have learnt very quickly that Raystede is an amazing place. Please continue to do what you do and help us spread the word so we can become even better.*



Helen Paxton

Introducing our newest Trustee - Helen Paxton

"I'm a passionate animal lover and feel blessed to share my home in Little Horsted with many much-loved family members including horses, dogs, ducks, chickens as well as my husband and two children, my parents and my mother-in-law! I've spent my 30-year career so far in the retail industry and I'm currently HR Director at Sainsbury's and Argos.

I've admired Raystede for many years and feel privileged to become a Trustee and work with the team to give as many animals as possible a better life."

HR & Operations: Kathryn Frost

Hello - I hope all is well with you – my door remains open as always should you wish to discuss anything.

My most exciting news is that I have a new assistant – Linda Hawkins – please make her and all other new staff feel welcome as and when you meet them (see welcome and goodbye list below).

Otherwise, I draw your attention to the Summer Sizzlers detailed on page 14.

Welcome and Goodbye

WELCOME			
Linda Hawkins	HR & Operations Assistant	Mikayla Bernstein	Corporate Fundraiser
Olive Carr	Animal Care Assistant	Matt Rigby	Digital Communications Manager
Sharon Savage	Animal Care Assistant	Aiden Hill	Café Assistant
Sapphire Reader	Animal Care Assistant	Maria Steel	Education Assistant
Amanda Teale	Animal Care Assistant	Rachel Stonestreet	Shop Assistant
Charlotte Skeet	Animal Care Assistant	Oliver Neilly	Shop Assistant
Diane Bate	Head of Finance and Resources	Jayne Chitty	Assistant Shop Manager
Frances Fisher	Fundraising Officer	Alison Mitchell	Assistant Shop Manager
Arron Polton	Events Fundraiser		
GOODBYE			
Wesley Matthews	HR & Operations Assistant	Peter Bowers	Head of Finance (retired)
Mel Baker	Animal Care Assistant	Cloe Frost	Café Supervisor
Charlotte Tattersall	Events Fundraiser		

If you know anyone who may be interested in working at Raystede, do point them in the direction of the careers page of our website - www.raystede.org.uk/careers

Thank you



Finance: Diane Bate



Diane & George

Introducing Diane Bate Head of Finance and Resources

Hello! I joined Raystede on 30 January. I have worked in the charity sector for over 25 years and am passionate about animal welfare.

I came from FOUR PAWS UK where I spent eight years as Head of Finance & Admin.

In my spare time, I roll up my sleeves as a volunteer for Folly Wildlife, cleaning and feeding injured local wildlife brought in for rehabilitation. I also enjoy spending time with my Havanese dog, George, who keeps me busy!



Peter Bowers says goodbye

First of all, thank you for your friendship over the last few years. You have been a great group of colleagues, and you have taught me a lot about a lot of things.

Secondly, thank you for the send off you gave me. I was here for less than four years, and have been in other jobs for a lot longer than that, but this has been the best send off I have ever had. Thank you for the presents and for all the nice things you've said about me, either directly or via the card and framed poster. I will keep in touch and will watch developments with interest.

Raystede is a special place, and I will always have special memories of it.

I leave you my very best wishes for the future.

Peter

Education: Gemma Price



Guinness' Story

The community Education Team have been working hard in the Eastbourne area. Meet Guinness, a dog whose owner was given some invaluable advice by our dog behaviourist, Lyndsey Lear.

Guinness and her owner, Jane, first visited the Community stall in Hailsham town centre. Guinness had already had multiple homes and Jane was desperate to make hers successful.

Guinness had severe separation anxiety, and was damaging things when Jane had to leave him. Lyndsey, our dog behaviourist, taught Jane about introducing 'micro absences' and building up to longer periods of absence over time. She explained that Jane could create opportunities for Guinness to become more confident alone, if she used a stair gate so that Guinness could be left alone in different areas in the house.

Jane returned to our community stall five times in the proceeding weeks and recently reported that the advice she received from Lyndsey and the practical application of such, has been life-changing for her and Guinness. She received ongoing support from Raystede and feels it really has made the difference between this home working or Guinness needing to be surrendered, as Jane didn't feel she could cope.

RAYSTEDE
Need some **FREE** advice about pets?

- Qualified dog behaviourist on hand to answer questions.
- General advice from our friendly Education Team.
- Free pop bags.
- Microchip and weight checks and guidance.
- Detailed info and leaflets to take away with you.
- Talk to us about the pets you have, and the pets you would like to have!

Drop in to any of our pop-up sessions, all 9.30am - 3.30pm.

Thursday 2 March The Lavel, Brighton	Thursday 9 March Preston Park, Brighton	Thursday 16 March Queens Park, Brighton
Thursday 23 March Slammer Park, Brighton	Thursday 30 March St Ann's Well Park, Brighton	Thursday 6 April Hove Park, Hove
Thursday 13 April The Place on Hove Lane, Hove		

www.raystede.org

The next leg of the community tour is in the Brighton area.

Please spread the word!

Commercial & Visitor Operations: Kerry Darwin

Hello all, I hope everyone is well - here are some Commercial highlights:

Breaking news

The Commercial Team at Raystede have reported profits in excess of £200k for 2022/23.

Every penny of profit made from the commercial activities including charity shops, pet goods, café, online selling and Peaceways, plus events like the Summer Fair and boot fairs, goes directly towards looking after the animals in Raystede's care. The whole team, staff and volunteers alike, have worked hard to achieve these results, and Head of Commercial Kerry Darwin says, she is thrilled and incredibly proud of the team.

Branching out

The new Raystede charity shop in Uckfield high street will be opening on 17 April.

After many months of contract negotiations and planning, we have secured the lease and the new shop is the talk of the town. While the shopfitters have been working on the new shop layout, we have been busy recruiting a new team for the shop, who are currently in training and keen to get started. A warm welcome to Jayne, Alison, Ollie and Rachel. If you are in Uckfield do call in to say hi and check out our latest branch.

Summer Sizzlers and other benefits

Our Winter Warmers free soup offer has been a big success. Since October, we have served staff and volunteers nearly 4,000 free bowls of soup! We are delighted that we will be continuing free lunches for staff and volunteers. From 1 April until the end of September, the soup will be replaced with a freshly made sandwich or wrap. Please see the poster on the next page for more details about this and other benefits.

You are of course always most welcome in the Café and we love seeing you all. The 50% discount for staff and volunteers will continue so whether you're coming to the Café or Grazers, you can also buy all your other favourites there, including coffees, hot and cold drinks, cakes, chips and sausage rolls – meat and vegan.

Huge thanks to Gemma, Heather, and the Café Team for the many gallons of soup they have made and thank you to all of you for supporting this initiative and the Café!

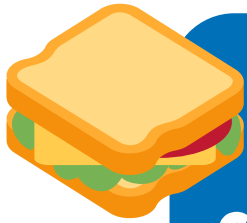
Thanks.

Kerry

**Monday 17 April
Uckfield Shop
opens...**

You can tell from the
photo that Sue is
excited!





Summer Sizzlers for Staff and Volunteers



FREE SANDWICHES

OR WRAPS

Daily 12pm – 2pm, collect from
the Café or Grazers.

Please order via the whiteboard
in the Staff Room.

50% STAFF DISCOUNT ON FOOD AND DRINK IN THE CAFÉ

Available for all staff and
volunteers during their shift.

FREE PET FOOD

When available, we will let staff and
volunteers know – expiry dates may be
short, first come, first served.

FREE FRUIT

Apples and pears from Raystede's
trees – help yourselves when in season.

FREE HYGIENE PRODUCTS

Available in the staff showers areas -
please help yourselves.

FREE CLOTHING!

A 'recycle and rehome' rail is available in
the Staff Room and in the Lewes shop.
Items may need repairing or washing.

CAR SHARING

Liftshare: www.liftshare.com/uk

Rideshark: www.rideshark.com

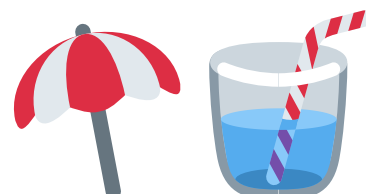
West Sussex Car Share:
www.westsussexcarshare.com

Or arrange an informal lift
share with colleagues.

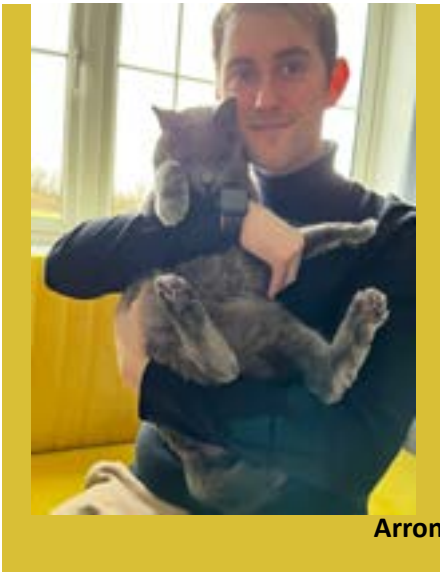
SPARE UNIFORM

If you get wet or need spare uniform,
good quality secondhand items are
available in the Drying Room.

New socks too!



Fundraising: Tanya Hunt



Arron

Welcome and goodbye

Charlotte Tattersall

Sadly, Charlotte has left Raystede. We appreciate all her contributions to the Fundraising Team as our Events Fundraiser and want to thank her for her hard work and dedication while she was here. Charlotte will be missed, and we wish her all the best in the future!

Arron Polton

Please join us in welcoming Arron who joins us as our new Events Fundraiser. We're thrilled to have him on board and can't wait to see his contributions to our team. Arron brings a wealth of experience and talent to our organisation, and we're excited to see how he will help us grow and expand our fundraising events.

Mikayla Bernstein

Welcome to Mikayla who joins us as Corporate Fundraiser. Mikayla is an experienced Corporate Fundraiser and excellent relationship builder. We are very pleased that she will be joining us to expand and develop our Corporate Fundraising opportunities and relationships.

Derek Hayes

Welcome to Derek Hayes who joins us as our Face to Face Fundraiser working on and off site to promote our Friends regular giving scheme. Derek has recently worked as an Early Years Advisor and has a background in fundraising and training.

Please say 'hello' to our new staff when you see them!



Mikayla

Wing Walk

We are thrilled to have the support of Mia, Customer Services Manager, and Jill, Visitor Information Volunteer, who are bravely taking on a wing walk in May to raise money for Raystede. We are incredibly grateful for their commitment and enthusiasm, and we want to wish them all the best for this exciting challenge. Best of luck and fly high!

50MIM

Thank you to all of the staff and volunteers who have taken part in the 50 Miles in March Challenge. This has been a popular activity with over 200 people signing up to get moving across March to support Raystede! There is still a little bit of time left to get those last miles in and to sponsor those who are taking part!

Gifts in Wills

In the Autumn, we ran some Facebook advertising for Gifts in Wills. These were really successful and far exceeded our expectations, to date they have resulted in 10 confirmed new gifts in Wills to Raystede! Emily is working on a new campaign for the end of April into May.

We have had a strong year for legacy income with £772k in so far and a healthy amount of money due to Raystede in the coming months.

A Big Thank You!

A huge thank you to everyone who helps with the Sponsor Tours. Over 220 Sponsors came on tours last year and we have 140 booked for tours up to July 2023.

We really couldn't deliver them without the help of the animal care teams. Sponsors often mention how good the information about their animal makes their visit. Being able to offer these tours really sets us apart and makes our Sponsorship unique.

Thanks

Tanya

Marketing: Janet Parsons



Keith and Hunter

Lookalike winners Keith and Hunter

We had quite a few entries in our Pet LookaLike Competition in January, including dogs, cats, rabbits and even a lizard! The competition was designed to raise awareness of Raystede and bring a little fun to the beginning of the year. Guest judge and comedian Zoe Lyons announced the winner - Keith Chilvers, with his beautiful 11-year-old Chihuahua, Hunter.

Zoe said, "A huge well done to all that entered and there are some rather startling similarities between you and your furry friends. I think you are all brilliant but the top award has to go to Keith Chilvers and his wee dog. What smashing matching facial fur they have... Well done Keith and thanks to all that took part... you are all stars!"

Media frenzy at Raystede

We have had some fantastic media coverage over the last few months, starting in November when we launched our comms around the animal welfare crisis. We were featured on both BBC South East and ITV Meridian, gave radio interviews on BBC Radio Sussex, Hailsham FM and Ashdown Radio on the huge numbers of requests for people wanting to give up their animals, the slowdown in rehoming and the effect of the cost-of-living crisis.

Our new Adoption Information Mornings initiative was featured in Hailsham News and V2 Radio Sussex.

Our Volunteer Recruitment Drop-in Days garnered lots of coverage, including ITV Meridian News, Ashdown Radio, Seahaven FM, BBC Radio Sussex and Sussex Express.

A huge thank you to all the interviewees involved – you all speak with such knowledge and passion about Raystede and have helped enormously in raising our profile in the local area and enhancing our reputation as experts in animal welfare.



BBC South East Team



Zoe Lyons with Groucho Barx