



# RSPCA Lancashire East Branch

Your LOCAL branch, caring for LOCAL animals

Registered Charity No: 232253

## **Role Outline - Volunteer Foster Carer**

<b>Volunteer Role:</b>	Volunteer Foster Carer
<b>Charity:</b>	RSPCA Lancashire East Branch (Reg. Charity No: 232253)
<b>Location:</b>	RSPCA Lancashire East Branch Animal Centre Nearer Holker House Farm Enfield Road Altham Accrington BB5 6NN
<b>Reports To:</b>	Animal Care Manager (ACM)/duty manager or nominated employee

### **1. Overall Purpose of the Role**

To be responsible for the temporary accommodation, socialisation and care of RSPCA animals in the foster carer's private home environment (n.b. the guardianship of such fostered animals remains with the RSPCA)

### **2. Principal Responsibilities**

#### *General Animal Care*

To support the animal care team, through the Fostering Coordinator, with the care and rehabilitation of animals in a home environment, this may include the following volunteer activities:

- To ensure that the accommodation meets the RSPCA's minimum standards and allow designated staff & volunteers to monitor the progress of fostered animals (n.b. this will involve both online and face-to-face meetings)
- To transport fostered animals to/from the nominated veterinary surgeon (n.b. except in an emergency this is subject to prior approval by the Branch)
- To transport fostered animals to/from the animal centre or other nominated locations for regular routine veterinary care including the monitoring of weight, condition, basic flea and worm treatments and to collect food and medication when required
- To care for any equipment provided for use with the fostered animal (e.g. animal carriers, bedding, bowls etc)
- To maintain regular contact with the centre and Branch Fostering Coordinator
- To return the animal to the Branch when requested

#### *Animal Rehabilitation*

- To provide day-to-day care, socialisation and exercise for the foster animal
- To administer basic medication as required
- To contribute to the development and implementation of both generic and individual animal training plans ensuring appropriate records are maintained
- To prepare and provide appropriate species specific environmental enrichment for animals in foster care
- To contribute towards the development of behavioural modification plans, ensure that

agreed plans are implemented and report any behavioural concerns to the FC/animal care team

- To work with and follow guidance from the RSPCA's national animal behaviour team
- To ensure animal centre routines are followed where appropriate
- To prioritise the welfare of the foster animal and manage/mitigate risk by following agreed protocols

#### *Cleaning & Hygiene*

- To follow appropriate biosecurity procedures & follow guidance from the RSPCA's veterinary department

#### *Feeding & Watering*

- To prepare and distribute food & water to the foster animal, observing any specific nutritional requirements for the individual animal as communicated by the animal care team

#### *Observation, Reporting and Record Keeping*

- To report any signs of ill health, injuries or abnormalities to the FC/animal care team
- To ensure that the allocated out of kennel/pen activities are completed and recorded with observations logged
- To maintain records, registers and statistics as required by management

#### *Security*

- To ensure that the home, including the garden and yard areas, are secure when animals are present to prevent accidents and possible escapes

#### *Health & Safety*

- To complete all relevant health & safety training, including online training modules

While at work staff & volunteers are required:

- To take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts of omissions
- To ensure that they follow all procedures laid down in the health and safety manual and as instructed.
- To cooperate with all Branch and Society policies and procedures for health & safety
- To report any health and safety concerns to the ACM/duty manager

#### *General*

- To attend volunteer meetings and undertake volunteer training courses (online and face-to-face) as required

### **3. Role Context**

- Work is assigned by the ACM/duty manager or nominated employee
- Work is carried out in accordance with Branch procedures which are governed by the RSPCA licensing regime, the Society's veterinary guidelines and other relevant RSPCA policies, procedures and advice
- Volunteers are supported by the ACM/duty manager or nominated employee

#### **4. Training & Support**

- Training in the specific role will be provided as part of the volunteer induction process
- All volunteers are required to undertake basic online Health & Safety (H&S) training as part of the volunteer induction process: this is a requirement of our insurers and upon completion ensures the volunteer is covered by our insurance provider (n.b. we can facilitate access to online training if you are otherwise unable to access the course)
- Volunteers are encouraged to sign up for the Learning Hive (the RSPCA's online training facility), which gives them access to a range of RSPCA training courses, including RSPCA standard procedures training
- Additional support including weekly contact will be provided by the Fostering Coordinator when a foster animal is in situ (n.b. regular, but not weekly, contact will be maintained at other times)

#### **5. Additional Information**

- Volunteer foster carers must sign an RSPCA fostering agreement (n.b. the agreement sets out the RSPCA's obligation to the foster carer and vice versa), this includes:
  - Reasonable access for RSPCA staff and designated volunteers to the fostered animal
  - Limits on the total number of animals (owned and fostered) that can be accommodated at the premises at any one time
  - The need for relevant written permission to be provided if the foster carer lives in shared and/or rented accommodation
  - The insurance obligations on the foster carer (n.b. the RSPCA does not insure the foster carer or animal for any damage that may occur, it is therefore the responsibility of the fosterer to ensure that appropriate insurance is in place)
  - Ideally foster carer should have access to a car and notify the insurer that they will, on occasion, use the car for volunteering activity including the transport of fostered animals
  - Foster carers must be over 18 years of age and should be protected against tetanus which may result from minor injuries (e.g. scratches) that can be incurred when socialising an animal
- The role may involve the lifting and carrying of heavy items

(n.b. this role outline is a statement of the volunteer role as of September 2022. It should not be seen as precluding future changes that may be deemed necessary by management or the Trustees)

# Person Specification

**Volunteer Role:** Volunteer Foster Carer

<i>Requirements</i>	<i>Essential</i>	<i>Desirable</i>
<i>Education</i>	Basic numeracy and literacy skills	GCSE or equivalent in Maths and English  NVQ Level 2 in Animal Care (or equivalent proven knowledge & experience)  RSPCA Standard Procedures
<i>Experience</i>	Basic understanding of the needs of animals  Experience of owning and caring for the species of animal to be fostered  Experience of animal handling the species to be fostered  Ability to recognise common ailments in the species of animal to be fostered  Proven capability to administer medication and treatment as required	Previous experience as a volunteer  Previous experience in the charitable sector  Experience of animal training & an understanding of animal behaviour for a variety of species
<i>Special Skills &amp; Knowledge</i>	Good oral and written communication skills.  Good interpersonal skills including the ability to communicate at all levels  Proven ability to work under direction but equally able to use their own initiative  Proven ability to prioritise workload	Knowledge of animal welfare issues, particularly as they relate to RSPCA policy and practice  Understanding of the need for confidentiality and ability to observe GDPR (data protection) requirements  Basic knowledge of health and safety regulations  Additional training in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animal handling</li> <li>• animal first aid</li> <li>• grooming &amp; coat care</li> </ul>
<i>Personality &amp; Disposition</i>	Demonstrable willingness to learn and acquire new skills through training  Personable and with an open, positive approach to new ideas coupled with drive and enthusiasm  A flexible and collaborative approach to colleagues both staff and volunteer  Honest, trustworthy and reliable	Ability to remain calm under pressure
<i>Special Circumstances</i>	Sympathy for animal welfare and the work of the RSPCA	Full UK Driver's Licence  Access to transport in an emergency