



Oxfordshire  
Animal  
Sanctuary

A horizontal banner image featuring three animals: a brown rabbit on the left, a dog with its tongue out in the center, and a tabby cat on the right. The text 'NEWSLETTER SPRING 2023' is overlaid in large white letters.

# NEWSLETTER SPRING 2023

In our last newsletter, we began by talking about the hot weather last summer. Remember that? No, nor do we. The cold snap in December was a challenge at the Sanctuary, particularly for the staff. They don't have the luxury of staying in a nice warm kennel or cattery all day, as they move between the animal habitats doing their work. They also don't have the benefit of having four legs to keep them stable on the icy ground either!

The dogs get to wear the latest winter clothes too. We're fortunate to be so well supported, we have a vast range of donated coats and outdoor gear for the dogs. The cats have the option to lie directly in front of their heaters (which of course they do) and the rabbits have the choice of whether to be near a heat pad or not.

Christmas time is often tough on the staff because they work their normal hours plus extras, meaning they don't get to spend much time with their loved ones at a time in the year when most people do. They are a dedicated team, and we make sure their sacrifice is not taken for granted. We show them how much they are appreciated and your kind feedback goes along way to keeping morale high.

Rehoming has been great since our last newsletter and there are some amazing success stories in this edition. The new year has also seen a good number of animals going home, to those who were patient enough to wait until after the festivities to welcome their new family member.

**Save the date: Fun Day 2023 will be on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May. We decided to make it earlier this year, due to the hot weather in July last year. We hope to see you there!**

# Rehoming in 2022

As always, we are extremely proud of the work we do each and every day and despite a fall in the total number of adoptions in 2022, compared to the years before Covid, we continue to help as many animals as we can.

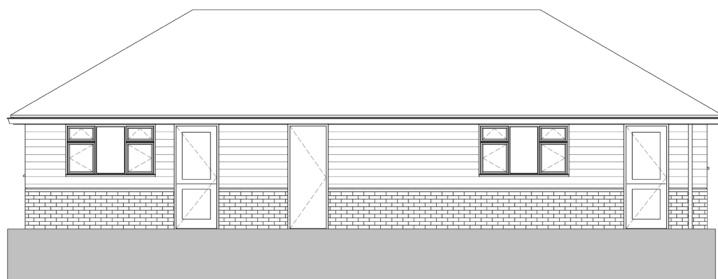
We had a few contagious disease scares last year meaning we couldn't take in animals while tests were carried out. Often when we take in animals whose owners were either unable or unwilling to give us accurate information about their background or vet history, we need to take some precautions to ensure contagions do not spread.

Recruiting new animal carers was also a factor in the lower rehoming numbers. We were significantly short-staffed for long periods last year as people moved on to pastures new. This meant that we couldn't have as many animals on site as normal. We are almost always at full capacity but when we don't have enough people to look after the animals to the required standard, we must ensure that we don't place too much pressure on the team by giving them too many little ones to care for daily. Whilst we took on more volunteers during this period, certain parts of the job can only be done by staff. Recruiting the right people takes time and although we pay our staff a living wage rather than minimum wage, there are lots of other jobs that pay more that aren't quite so physically and mentally demanding. We are now back up to our compliment though, so this year should be a little smoother, hopefully!

## Staff welfare

As we mentioned in a previous newsletter, now that all of the animal accommodation has been upgraded over the past 10 or so years, we are constructing a Reception building, which comprises a new staff room, office and storage space. With any luck, this will be completed by the summer and the animal care staff can have a warm, rodent-free area to use during break times, with running water, and the admin team can have a bit more space and some decent heating!

Below is an architect's drawing of what it will look like.



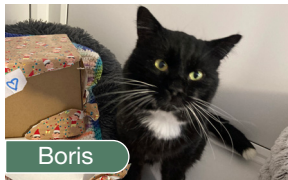
# Cats

Since our last update, we have offered a safe refuge to 44 cats. Many of these cats have needed basic veterinary care including vaccinations and neutering. But some have needed more extensive procedures like Ronnie who needed to have entropion surgery on both her eyelids. We are pleased to say after a speedy recovery she found her forever home. In our final few months of 2022, we found wonderful homes for 63 cats. Whilst they were all special in their own right we have several that stand out, mainly 17-year-old Keiko. What a gentle loving kitty and one who was starting to show signs of early dementia but we found her a loving retirement home.

Our final adoption of the year was a cat with FIV called Boris. He was the sweetest most laid-back cat you could meet. He came from a local rescue that asked for our help in finding him his forever home. Thankfully his adopters gave him the best gift of all, unconditional love.



Keiko



Boris



Ronnie

# Rabbits

2022 ended very much the same way as it started, with an endless number of people needing our help to rehome their rabbits. Sadly, this appears to be a nationwide problem and one that won't improve until pet shops stop selling rabbits (or any animal for that matter.) We have taken in 38 rabbits over several months and still have around 30 on our waiting list. On a more positive note, we have found forever homes for 32 rabbits of which we helped bond 8 single rabbits to our adopter's rabbit to provide them with the most precious gift and that is companionship.

We finished the year on a high by saying a fond farewell to our longest-resident rabbits Drax & Daphne. Both had been here for nearly a year and despite several adoption pleas, they seemed to get very little interest. But we never gave up hope and in November they went off to start their new adventures in their very own rabbit-proofed room.



Bramble



Brian



Drax & Daphne

# Dogs

Since our last update, many dogs have found their forever home. Blaze is one of the ones we wanted to tell you about.

Blaze came to us last autumn due to a change in her owners' circumstances. Almost all animals are scared and confused on arrival and Blaze was no different. Usually, after a few days, most animals begin to settle into the daily routine and relax more. Blaze did not settle at all. She was so unhappy being here, she needed much more attention and staff care compared to everyone else. We're always happy to do this and although it is fairly common to devote extra time and care to several animals in our care, Blaze was quite extreme. Her high level of stress meant that meeting potential adopters was also stressful and therefore, we had to explain to people that she can be calm and loving, even if she doesn't show it initially.

She needed an experienced owner with lots of patience. After a few appeals online, a potential owner came forward and arranged to meet her. The visits were quite stressful, but they trusted our team and took a chance on her. Since she's been home, she has become the most loving dog we knew she was all along. Here's a brief extract from one of the updates from his new owners. She has been renamed Daisy.

*"...I can't wait any longer to let you know how beautiful & amazing she is. The very first night here she slept with Richard all night & didn't wake up until morning.... This little dog is amazing, I cannot tell you how much I love her. Thank you for the amazing work you all do. I shall certainly be supporting OAS with a donation at different times of the year. Take care lots to you & the animals".*

You can only imagine how many tears these words brought to the eyes of everyone here.

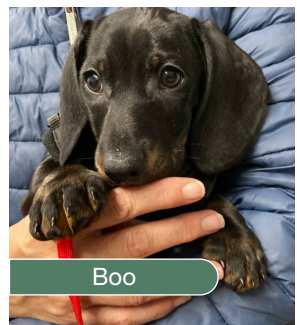
Milo, a crossbreed male, who had been here a long time due to his acute behavioural needs, was rehomed in December. His owner visited weekly for 3 months to get to know him and now has weekly visits to the home, from our behaviourist, to help with the challenges that lie ahead. Things are going phenomenally well at the moment. The owner is very committed, has a very good understanding of dog behaviour, and crucially, she loves him dearly so should be able to cope with the ups and downs. Boo and Tommy, two puppies (pictured right) also found their homes and have settled in brilliantly.



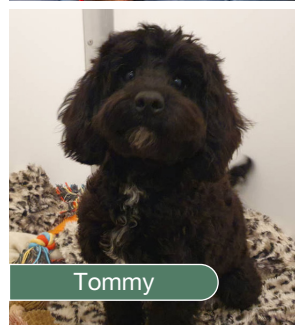
Blaze / Daisy



Milo



Boo



Tommy

# Shops - Calling All Volunteers!

The OAS shops have had a busy and productive few months as winter is upon us. Thanks to our wonderful customers for some lovely donations, especially over Christmas.

We are, as always, looking for good quality items especially in homeware Bric-a-Brac in all our shops and furniture in our Witney and Didcot shops.

We are also looking for volunteers. Volunteers play a vital role in the smooth running of our shops. We are looking for people to volunteer for a minimum of 3 to 4 hours per shift each week. Many of our current volunteers enjoy the motivation and confidence it gives them to meet new people and also to give back to the community. We think of our volunteers as part of the bigger Sanctuary family.



Our Witney shop, in particular, needs more volunteers [right now](#).

This is our largest shop and a very popular shop for donors and customers, so there's always plenty to do!

If you are interested in volunteering regularly in our Witney shop, please call 01993 708080 or email [james@oascharity.org.uk](mailto:james@oascharity.org.uk)

**...and finally!**

## Amazon Smile and Give As You Live

Unfortunately, Amazon has decided to stop its Smile program. This is a shame because it had been providing much-needed income for the animals. However, there's an alternative. Give as you Live is a free way to raise money for the Oxfordshire Animal Sanctuary when you shop online!

- ▶ Shop at over 5,500 leading stores via the Give as you Live site and you'll raise free funds for our Sanctuary.
- ▶ It's completely free to join and use – we get money from the retailers via the Give as You Live system, you don't pay more in a "hidden" donation.
- ▶ It's simple to use and you get access to great offers too!





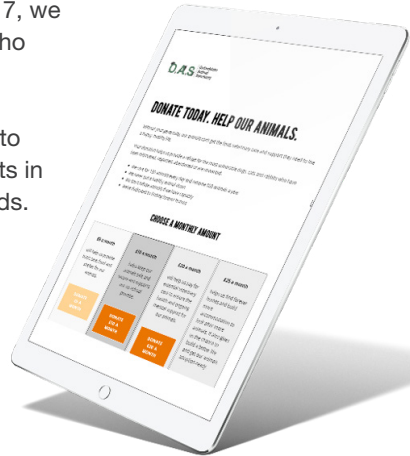
# Donations Update

Since launching our new website in late 2017, we have been growing the number of people who donate to us monthly via direct debit.

The aim is to try and protect our future and to add to our legacy income. The generous gifts in Wills still account for the majority of our funds. If you would like more information about legacy gifts, please contact the Sanctuary.

This strategy has proven incredibly successful and helped see us through the incredibly tough times of the pandemic. In 2022, almost a third of our total income was direct via the website and Facebook. In 5 short years, these donations have grown in size by 5000%!

Thank you if you donate to use this way as it gives us the ability to plan ahead and ultimately to take care of as many animals as we can.



♥ PLEASE BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR ♥

## Stay in touch



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