

WHY ARE WE NO LONGER OPEN FOR VIEWING THE ANIMALS

There are many reasons why we are not open for people to wander around looking at the animals available for adoption anymore. Here are the main reasons:

- 1) During lockdown when we were closed to visitors we noticed that our animals were so much more relaxed and happy without strangers wandering around and children running about shouting and screaming and banging on the animals pen doors etc. We did turn in to a bit of a zoo – especially during the school holidays, which was not good for our animal's welfare.

We now offer a bespoke rehoming service where people can meet our animals in a safe and relaxed environment if they are a potential match for them. We have a dedicated team of very experienced people whose sole purpose is to match people who apply to adopt. This way the animals are not stressed unnecessarily. Most of our animals do come from traumatic backgrounds and have been neglected or intentionally abused, so doing things this way puts their welfare first rather than us trying to please everyone else.

- 2) Some people liked to come in so they could see if they 'connected to an animal' or to 'see their personalities' for themselves by standing in front of their pens and putting their fingers in through the bars, but this was stressful and scary for the animals as well as giving the potential adopter a false impression of their temperament, especially as dogs and cats don't show themselves off very well in a stressful kennel environment. We also had to deal with incidents where adults and children were bitten, despite several notices on each pen asking people not to put fingers in with the animals.

- 3) A difficult problem arose when people saw an animal in a kennel or cat pen that they 'fell in love with' that was completely unsuitable for them and their family. We then had to be the bad guys trying to explain that although you may love the look of this particular animal it just isn't the right one for you - but let's see what else is suitable instead – which inevitably ended up with lots of complaints to deal with as someone was angry that they couldn't just have what they wanted, even though we tried to explain why it wasn't suitable!

We have still managed to rehome the same amount of animals this way so it has not had a negative impact on the whole purpose of what we do here - apart from upsetting a minority of people who just liked to come and look around so they could choose a dog or cat they liked the look of.

You will find many other rescue centres are remaining closed for viewing now and we look forward to the day when this becomes the new normal so people don't get so upset about it. All we are doing is trying to make our animals lives the best we can whilst they are with us, and hopefully after reading this you can agree this is the best option.

