

**RSPCA Southport, Ormskirk & District Branch - Animal Centre Covid 19 Risk Assessment**

<b>Risk Assessment Name:</b>		<b>Fostering / Adoption Process for cats during closure of Animal Centre (2nd lockdown -England from 5/11/20).</b>		<b>Person Completing Risk Assessment:</b>		Paul Gibson	
<b>Date:</b>		08-Jun-20		<b>Date for Review:</b>		Reviewed 30/7/20, 17/8/20 & 05/11/20 & 5/1/21 & 12/3/21 & 25/3/21	
<b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Who might be harmed and how?</b>	<b>What are you already doing?</b>	<b>Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?</b>	<b>Action by who?</b>	<b>Action by when?</b>	<b>Done</b>	
Positive or suspect COVID-19 interactions with the public	Branch Staff / Volunteers: Exposure to 'COVID-19 Positive' members of the public.	The Animal Centre is currently closed to the general public. The <i>temporary adoption process</i> includes minimal interaction with the public in a controlled way during the collection of animals. A strict 'appointment only' system is in place.	All potential adopters / fosterers asked additional COVID-19 questions after receipt of Perfect Match form. Do not proceed with any adoption/foster enquiry where any symptoms have been declared. Strict adherence to the <i>RSPCA Adoption Handover Procedure Covid-19</i> which includes social distancing.	Staff	Until further notice. From 29/3/21 appointments are allowed for animal collection (outside only). From 12/4/21 appointments are allowed for collection and can be inside if there is a welfare need.	Yes	
Transmission of virus to staff and volunteers who have been notified by the NHS that they are 'clinically extremely vulnerable' (sometimes referred to as the shielded) group	Branch Staff / Volunteers	CEV staff (none) and any volunteers are advised to follow current HM Govt advice to stay at home up to and including 31/3/21.	From 1 August 2020 the restrictions on those shielding were relaxed, however most in that group then fell back to the vulnerable group. From 5 November there was little change in Govt Advice and again at the end of Lockdown 2. However, from Lockdown 3 CEV staff and volunteers will receive another letter from the NHS instructing them to stay at home. From 31 March the CEV categorisation / shielding scheme comes to an end.	Staff / Volunteers in that group (see appendices)	Until further notice	Yes	

<p>Transmission of virus to staff and volunteers who are within the 'clinically vulnerable' group</p>	<p>Branch Staff / Volunteers</p>	<p>CV staff and volunteers are advised to follow current HM Govt advice. Usual Social Distancing rules apply.</p>	<p>In line with the HM Govt Covid-secure guidelines, any staff in this group should operate in the safest on-site role, enabling them to stay 2 metres away from others at all times. The role should be agreed in consultation with the employee and assessed as to whether it involves an acceptable level of risk. People in this group can meet other people outdoors and indoors, but remain more vulnerable than others. We are now allowing the clinically vulnerable to return as staff and in volunteer roles where social distancing can be maintained. Staff and volunteers need to keep abreast of changes in Government guidance, which is constantly changing.</p>	<p>Staff / Volunteers in this group (see appendices</p>	<p>Until further notice</p>	<p>Yes</p>
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<p>Virus transmission among people in the Reception, dog lobby, kennels and cattery buildings</p>	<p>Branch Staff / Volunteers / members of the public</p>	<p>Reverting to previous practice under lockdown.</p>	<p>There will be no open public access to the Animal Centre. Perspex screening has been fitted around the till and counter area to act as a barrier to airborne matter from anybody with legitimate access to reception. Every reasonable effort must be made to comply with the social distancing guidelines (keeping people 2 metres apart when possible, 1+ if not). A managed Volunteer Booking System is in place allowing for 2 practical animal care and 2 dog walkers at any one time, with slots an hour apart. Volunteers will only be allowed on site for prebooked visits / slots. Staff and volunteers who develop symptoms of coronavirus (a new continuous cough and/or a high temperature, loss of taste &amp; smell) should stay at home for 10 days from onset of symptoms. If a volunteer or staff member lives in a household where someone else is unwell with symptoms of coronavirus then they must stay at home in line with Government's guidance. Temperatures will be taken of all on site. Members of the Public should wash their hands on arrival and before they leave. Staff and volunteers should regularly wash their hands with soap and water as often as possible and for 20 seconds each time.</p>	<p>Reception staff</p>	<p>Until further notice. From 29/3/21 appointments are allowed for animal collection (outside only). From 12/4/21 appointments are allowed for collection and can be inside if there is a welfare need.</p>	<p>Done</p>
<p>Interaction with members of the public (adopters/fosterers - delivery / collection of animals) - risk of infection of COVID -19.</p>	<p>Branch staff / members of the public.</p>	<p>Separate covid-secure delivery procedure in place for when needed, but from 29/3/21 collection by appointment only will be allowed from the Animal Centre.</p>	<p>Provision of PPE provided /wearing of gloves and sanitisers provided. Employees/volunteers are aware of the risk of transmission of COVID-19 and will not attend work if there is a known risk. Employees will travel in separate vehicles. RSPCA Adoption / Fostering Delivery and Handover Procedure Covid-19 which includes social distancing.</p>		<p>Until further notice. From 29/3/21 appointments are allowed for animal collection (outside only). From 12/4/21 appointments are allowed for collection and can be inside if there is a welfare need.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

			Hygiene procedures to be followed before and after any delivery of animals			
Transmission of COVID-19 from equipment	Branch staff / volunteers / members of the public.	New process	Carriers and equipment that have been used should be washed with soap and water and then sprayed using a disinfectant spray. Disposal of any used PPE and used animal bedding to be kept away from any other items for disposal. Immediately dispose of any used PPE and used animal bedding in a clinical waste bag in the relevant clinical waste bin. Hands to be washed / sanitised after disposal.	Staff	Until further notice	Yes
Reputational risks to the RSPCA that adopted/fostered animals are being placed in homes without indepth checks. Potential negative perception that the RSPCA is not adhering to government restrictions / essential travel only guidelines	Perception from members of the public or press, that the adoption / fostering process is being adversely relaxed, exposing animals to risk/harm without home visits or prior interaction with animals. RSPCA brand / reputation could be negatively impacted if the perception is that the RSPCA is not following government guidelines/advice on essential travel.	Robust adoption/fostering process. alternative checks and balances in place to 'physical home visits'. The meet and greet of dogs is allowed in secure outside area with Social Distancing and cats in a secure area of the cattery, utilising face coverings / masks.	Current adoption/fostering process has been modified to include strict checks and temporary measures to replace physical home home visits. Post adoption visits (when business returns to normal) will also take place. RSPCA and other animal charities' temporary process has been approved by DEFRA and health and safety measures proposed are inline with government guidelines. RSPCA employees are classed as key workers for the purpose of delivering animals. The virtual rehoming process is fully outlined on our website.	Staff	Until further notice	Yes

Slower than normal adoption / fostering process	Adopters/fosterers may become frustrated. Potential for placements / homes to fall through.	Adopting some animals at a slower rate is better than rehoming none at all.	Expectations of adopters/fosterers to be managed as part of the telephone interview process. Placements overall may in fact be quicker due to not having to wait for a 'physical home visit'.	Staff	20/04/2020	Yes
Travelling to deliver an animal to the adopter/fosterer	Staff:  Risk of accident in a vehicle. Risk of physical or verbal attack from a member of the public due to a perception that RSPCA people are not key workers/ or movements are not classed as essential travel.	Branch staff driving animals will already have had experience of customer service.	Branch staff are classed as key workers (key worker letter provided). Telephone call in advance of the journey to the adopter/fosterer to advise of approximate ETA. Journey is specifically to deliver the animal. Staff delivering animals will be provided with guidance on how to respond to queries and risks. From 17/8/20 animal deliveries ceased in favour of prebooked appointments to visit or rehome animals in line with recent changes in the Defra approved rehoming procedure. From 5/1/21 prebooked appointments ceased for Lockdown 3 in favour of delivery only. In exceptional animal welfare circumstances, repeat delivery / meet / greets can take place. From 29/3/21 an appointment only collection process recommences.	Staff	Until further notice. From 29/3/21 appointments are allowed for animal collection (outside only). From 12/4/21 appointments are allowed for collection and can be inside if there is a welfare need.	Yes

<p>Delivery of cats &amp; dogs to the adopter / fosterer - private residence</p>	<p>Branch Staff Risk of entering an unsafe area / home.</p>	<p>New process</p>	<p>Telephone the adopter/fosterer when outside of the property. Strictly no entry to the actual property / home as animal handovers will be carried out at the roadside/ entrance to property. From 17/8/20 animal deliveries ceased in favour of prebooked appointments to visit or rehome animals in line with recent changes in the Defra approved rehoming procedure. From 5/1/21 prebooked appointments ceased for Lockdown 3 in favour of delivery only. In exceptional animal welfare circumstances, repeat delivery / meet / greets can take place. From 29/3/21 an appointment only collection process recommences.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Until further notice. From 29/3/21 appointments are allowed for animal collection (outside only). From 12/4/21 appointments are allowed for collection and can be inside if there is a welfare need.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Return of animals following an unsuccessful adoption, or in the case of fostering, after any government restrictions are lifted, or if the owner/fosterer becomes ill.</p>		<p>Owner makes arrangements with the animal centre to return an animal (subject to space/returns criteria).</p>	<p>A reversal of the delivery / collection would take place. The additional COVID-19 questions builds in safeguards into the rehoming: the potential adopter/fosterer is only working from home for a short period (eg: furlough) and has no ability to care for the animal after this period this will be discussed prior to adoption/foster. The likelihood for an adoption would be declined if the centre staff are not convinced there is an ability to care for an animal long term. For fostering this will be discussed and assessed at the initial interview stage and will be subject to individual animal matching. The COVID 19 Questionnaire asks adopters/fosterers what support they have to care for animals should they become ill. This process will help to reduce the number of potential returns due to lack of support if someone falls ill, or returns due to people returning to work, however, any other returns would follow our standard process.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Until further notice</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Post adoption/fostering support	Adopters/fosterers having not met the animals in advance may have differing expectations and feel they are unable to cope.	Support from centre staff/ Behaviour & Welfare Advisor/ Regional Clinical Animal Behaviourist	Adopters/fosterers will be fully briefed inline with the current adoption / foster process which includes any settling in, enrichment and behavioural needs. Following any adoption/foster placement, the centre/branch will have a system in place to ensure follow up calls are made to the adopter/fosterer regularly. Support and advice will be provided for any behavioural concerns which may develop in the home. Once restrictions are lifted a post adoption home visit will be carried out.	Staff	Until further notice	Yes
<b>References or Links (Please add links and references to documents used within the Risk Assessment below:</b>						
<a href="https://www.rspcasouthport.org/adopting">https://www.rspcasouthport.org/adopting</a>						

**Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (Shielded Group). This group has the same guidance as the Clinically Vulnerable from 1 August 2020.**

Clinically extremely vulnerable people may include the following people. Disease severity, history or treatment levels will also affect who is in the group.

1. Solid organ transplant recipients.
2. People with specific cancers:
  - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
  - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
  - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
  - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
  - people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
  - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
3. People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary (COPD).
4. People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as Severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), homozygous sickle cell).
5. People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
6. Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

**People who fall in this group should have been contacted to tell them they are clinically extremely vulnerable.**

**Clinically Vulnerable**

This group includes those who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
  - chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
  - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure · chronic kidney disease
  - chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
  - chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson’s disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy · diabetes
- problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed

- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- those who are pregnant