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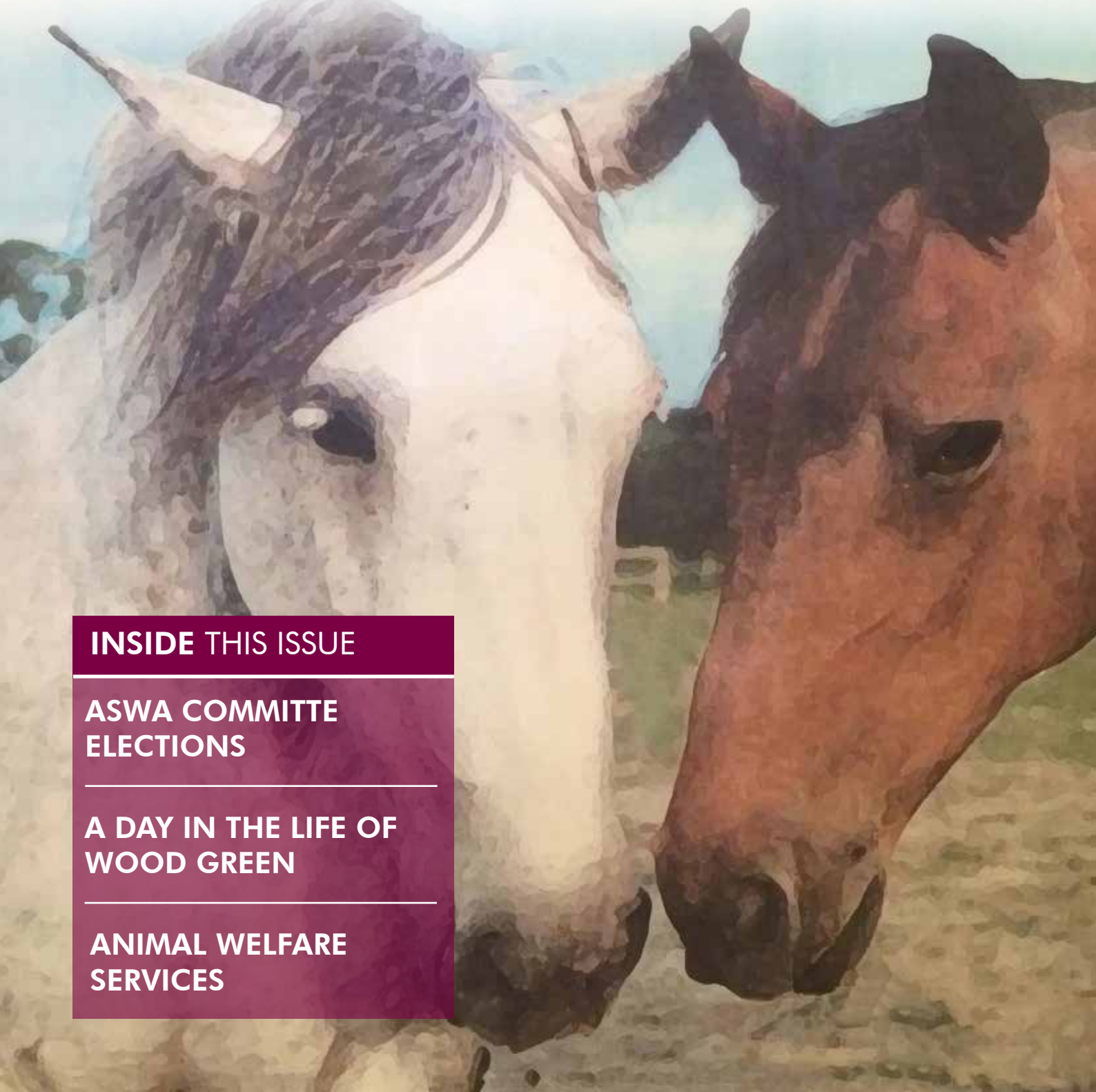
Spring 2015

Price £2 (free to members)



animalwatch

PUTTING ANIMALS ON THE AGENDA OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH



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Cover image courtesy of Hillside Animal Sanctuary. Used with permission.

DORIS' DIARY

Hello! My name is Doris, and I am a Border Leicester ewe with very large ears! I was rescued by ASWA secretary Sam Chandler, as I had outlived my usefulness as a breeding ewe.

Below are some great events ewe may enjoy!

Sunday 8 March

Animal service, St Nicholas, Snitterby, Lincolnshire, 11am.

Saturday 16 May

ASWA Annual General Meeting, St Michael's Church, 4 Chester Square, London, SW1W 9HH, 11am. The guest speaker will be Vanessa Amaral-Rogers from BugLife (the Invertebrate Conservation Trust).

Monday 18 to Thursday 21 May

Annual Ecumenical Animal Welfare Retreat, Noddfa, North Wales. For more information, please contact Mrs Irene Casey, irene.casey@talktalk.net.

Sunday 31 May

Animal blessing service, St Michael & All Angels, Watford, 3pm. Preacher: Revd Dr Martin Henig, ASWA Vice-President.

Sunday 7 June

Animal blessing service, Craigiebuckler Church Hall, Springfield Road, Aberdeen, 3pm.

Sunday 14 June

Animal blessing service, St Lawrence, North Hinksey, Oxford, 3pm. Preacher: Revd Dr Martin Henig.

Sunday 4 October

Animal Welfare Sunday.

ASWA Annual Service, Newcastle Cathedral (time TBA). Preacher: The Rt Revd James Jones, former Bishop of Liverpool and ASWA Patron. This is NOT an animal blessing service.

Animal blessing service, St Andrew's United Church, Kirton in Lindsey, Lincolnshire, 3pm.

Annual pet service, Great Malvern Priory, 3pm. Contact Mary Weatherill, parish secretary, for more details (greatmalvernpriory@me.com).

for further details of events, please visit the website: www.aswa.org.uk



HELLO AND WELCOME TO ANIMALWATCH

Welcome to *Animalwatch*. Our focus in this issue is animal rescue. Many of our readers support various animal rescue centres and societies, and we thought it was right to commission articles that give us an insight into their work. You will also find in this issue information about those standing for places on the ASWA committee at the 2015 AGM. Also included with this issue is a cardboard collection box. We hope that our members might be able to put these boxes out in church or elsewhere to help us to collect funds to support ASWA's work. We suggest that members bank any cash collected and send ASWA a cheque for the equivalent amount.

Thank you to all of our readers who completed the *Animalwatch* survey. The results are being analysed and will be reported in the next issue.

We hope that you enjoy keeping up-to-date with news and information on our website. Do check regularly for resources and information about upcoming events. Please do make a note of the dates in Doris' Diary – especially the AGM in May. We hope to see you there.

Please send any items for consideration for *Animalwatch* to Revd Jennifer Brown, Editor, PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT. Email is even better – animalwatch@jenbrown.org.uk. Please note that, owing to space restrictions, it may not be possible to print all contributions, and that letters and other contributions may be edited for length.

Jennifer Brown, Editor

The deadline for the Summer magazine is **Monday 25th May 2015**.

ASWA SPEAKERS AVAILABLE

If you have a group or service that would welcome an ASWA speaker, we would love to hear from you! We often travel a fair distance so please call to discuss it. We usually bring a stall and literature and always liaise with our hosts to ensure the talk is appropriate for their particular audience. Keep the invitations rolling in!

EMAIL ADDRESSES PLEASE!

ASWA is updating its membership records to include email addresses. This will keep the ASWA membership better informed of our activities and expand our influence to help animals.

Just put "ASWA email address (and your name)" in the subject line and send it to:

aswamembership@btinternet.com

Thank you to all those who have already done this in response to the appeal in previous issues.

ASWA Donation Envelopes

If you are planning an ASWA animal service, don't forget there are ASWA Donation Envelopes for you to give out at those services.

For more information please contact:
Tel/Fax: 01252 843093
Email: AngSocWelAnimals@aol.com



A Warm Welcome to our new members. We look forward to hearing from you.

Jane Anderson, North Springfield, Chelmsford

Frances N. Brown, Bromeswell, Suffolk

Lorna Cockrill, Banbridge, Co Down, Northern Ireland

A. Coleman, Headley Down, Bordon

Belinda Cooper, St Dogmaels, Cardigan, Pembrokeshire

Anne Finch, Bembridge, Hampshire

David Hector, Whitchurch, Cardiff

J. Hinman, Worthing, Sussex

Sarah Hird, Harrogate, North Yorkshire

Amber Lewis, Liverpool, Merseyside

Lindsey M. Lindley, Rickham, East Portlemouth, Devon

Judi Marsh, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham

Shona McCarthy, Noble Park North, Victoria, Australia

Mr B. Patterson, South Shields

Fiona Rosen, Colindale, London

Charlotte Swift, Edinburgh, Midlothian

Joanne Wakelin, Papakowhai, New Zealand

Jennifer Williams, Deanshanger, Milton Keynes

To all our new members we extend a warm welcome and, along with our existing members, we would ask that you encourage others who share your concern for animal welfare to join. Introductory leaflets are available from the Secretary.

GOOD NEWS

Court recognises animal rights

In December 2014, Reuters news agency reported that a court in Argentina had ruled that an orangutan held in a zoo there could be freed and allowed to live in a sanctuary, recognising that the ape had rights as a “non-human person”, among which is the right to be free from unlawful imprisonment. While this decision may yet be overturned on appeal, the very fact that a court was willing to hear the case and make such a ruling is a positive development, and may lead to more animals’ rights being acknowledged in law, not only in Argentina, but around the world.



NEWS & NOTICES

Don't forget, you can follow ASWA on Twitter – aswanews



You can also keep up with what's new via our website – www.aswa.org.uk.

Check the website for the latest resources for youth & children.

ASWA AGM

The annual general meeting will be taking place on Saturday 16 May, 11am at St Michael's Church, 4 Chester Square, London, SW1W 9HH. The guest speaker will be Vanessa Amaral-Rogers, Campaigns Officer for BugLife (the Invertebrate Conservation Trust).

New ASWA merchandise

A new ASWA badge, featuring the new ASWA logo, is now available. These cost £1.50 and are available through the ASWA website or can be ordered by sending a cheque to the ASWA Secretary.

Awards for NOWZAD Dogs founder

Pen Farthing, founder of NOWZAD Dogs, has been awarded both the CNN Hero of the Year Award for 2014 and the American Dog Rescue Foundation's 2014 Humanitarian Award. Pen will be familiar to many ASWA members as a speaker at our annual Remembrance service.

Bishop of Oxford retires

The Rt Revd John Pritchard, ASWA Patron, retired as Bishop of Oxford on 31st October 2014, but we are delighted that he has agreed to continue as a Patron of ASWA. Bishop John is a pastor who sees life in all its complexity, and that has included the world of animals and nature. Whenever possible he has used not the usual gilt crozier but a genuine northern shepherd's crook, for he has a close understanding and rapport with sheep in their upland pastures as well as people. We give thanks for his episcopal ministry, and rejoice in his ongoing support for ASWA and his love for God's creation.

ASWA Local groups

Don't forget that there are ASWA local groups in different areas.

- The Oxford group has not met recently, but hopes to begin meeting again soon. The aim is to meet quarterly in venues around the Oxford diocese. The contact for the group is Revd Martin Henig (martin.henig@arch.ox.ac.uk).
- The Surrey/South London group meets monthly on either Friday or Saturday afternoons at 2pm. The contact for this group is Janice Hoyle (01372-842884).
- The Suffolk group meets bi-monthly on the third Wednesday at 7.30pm at Stowmarket parish church. The contact for the group is Peta Whiting (01449 677766 or peta@kimberleyhall.biz).

- The Watford group meets monthly. Members come from as far as Tring, Milton Keynes and Chesham to this group. The contact for this group is Sarah Dunning (01923-467502).

In addition, there is an Ecumenical group, the Three Counties Animal Welfare Prayer Group, who meet for a service at Gloucester Cathedral at 12.15 on the first Saturday of each month. The contact for the ecumenical group is the Revd Helen Hall (01633-677775 or helen.hall123@ntlworld.com).

ASWA is always keen to support the formation of new groups. If you are interested in starting a group in your area, please contact the Secretary.

Meat-free Lent

Once again, ASWA is encouraging our members to take part in meat-free Lent. Abstaining from meat during Lent is an ancient Christian practice, and can be a useful spiritual discipline. Going without can help us to value, rather than take for granted, the food that we eat and the creatures from whom it comes. Already a vegetarian? Why not go for a vegan Lent? Let us know how you get on.

Correction

In the article on live exports from Australia (*Animalwatch*, Autumn 2014), we inadvertently stated that Animals Asia conducted an investigation into the treatment of animals exported to Indonesia. This should have read Animals Australia. We apologise for the error.

POETS' CORNER

Poet's Corner continues to generate positive feedback from our readers. If you have an original poem that you would like to submit for consideration, please do send it to the editor (see contact details in 'Hello and Welcome', p3). Please note that poems must be the contributor's own work. If previously published, evidence that the author retains copyright and right to republish must be provided.

The Visitor

I heard a noise outside my door and I guess it wasn't wise
But I opened it and there he stood, a little angel in disguise.
He was small and thin and shivering; had large, round, pleading eyes.
So I let him in to warm himself, again not very wise.
But I couldn't leave him in the cold, not a little scrap that size.
I offered him some food to eat which vanished in a wink.
Then a small burp made me smile.
The way he ate made me think
He hadn't eaten in a while.

He strode into the sitting room, which I thought was rather bold;
I'd only offered him a meal and shelter from the cold.
He looked around, seemed to approve and chose my favourite chair.
He snuggled down and fell asleep; he looked so comfy there.
As I watched him sleep contentedly I suddenly realised that
By opening my door tonight
I've got myself a cat.

A. Coleman

ASWA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

It's Election time again! There is, however, no postal voting form in this issue of *Animalwatch* because at the time of going to press there were fewer candidates for committee places than there were vacancies. The three candidates looking to stand for another three-year term are Mrs Jenny White for Treasurer; Revd Hugh Broadbent for committee member; and Revd Jennifer Brown for committee member. There are no new candidates this year.

ASWA committee members are trustees, which means they have legal duties and responsibilities. The tasks of the committee are to manage the day-to-day running of ASWA, including the planning of ASWA services, commissioning and producing informational material, managing the budget, organising fund-raising events and the production of *Animalwatch*, to name but a few. You will find information about the candidates below:

Jenny White:

Jenny has been Treasurer since 2006. She is married with two grown up children and works full-time supporting her husband in his specialist engineering consultancy. Jenny shares her home with her husband and two dogs.



Hugh Broadbent:

Hugh has served as an ordained priest in the Church of England since 1979. In 2009 he became Rector of All Saints with Christ Church, Snodland. He is married to Jane, a palliative care physician, and has two grown-up children.



His interest in animal welfare and his concern for the enormous problems of cruelty and abuse that we face in this modern world arose whilst he was a curate in Chatham. He became aware of these issues through an encounter with an ASWA member living in the parish. He joined ASWA and a year or so later was invited to join the central committee.

Hugh provides theological contributions to the committee and has written all the orders of service for our annual services over a number of years, as well as a number of discussion booklets. In particular, he was directly responsible for the preparation of our Animal Welfare Sunday Order of Service publication and the comprehensive 'Animal Welfare Patterns of Worship'.

Jennifer Brown:

Originally from the USA, Jennifer moved to the UK in 1999 and



joined ASWA in 2001. Jennifer was ordained in the Church of England in 2005, and is currently on the teaching staff of Ripon College Cuddesdon, work that she combines with the post of Science Missioner for the Churn Benefice in South Oxfordshire. She has been the editor of *Animalwatch* since 2011, and was responsible for drafting the animal welfare factsheets introduced by ASWA for Animal Welfare Sunday in 2014. Jennifer sees care for our fellow creatures as very much a part of the Christian calling. She lives in Oxfordshire with her husband, dog and cat.

Two long-serving committee members, Simon July and Barry Miles, have both decided to stand down from the committee this year. We thank them for their many years of service and their contributions to ASWA's work.

The deadline for applications to stand for election to the ASWA committee next year (2016) is 15th January 2016, but we ask that you contact the Secretary by the end of December 2015 in order to facilitate getting profiles of candidates into *Animalwatch* on time. Candidates must be willing to attend three committee meetings a year, which are held in London, and must be proposed and seconded - preferably by existing ASWA members or a member of the clergy who knows you well.

MISS FOX

Three years ago, one of my clients telephoned to ask me to come around, as they had a fox that kept following them around the garden and trying to get into their house. When I got there, I found a young vixen. I brought her back to the surgery to find that she had several open wounds all down her spine, and was covered in hundreds of maggots that my wife and I spent two or three hours removing. My wife promptly named her Miss Fox. We feared for her survival, as she was quite weak and very poorly. We had to help her feed, as she was too weak to eat by herself.

Fortunately, she recovered with the help of antibiotics, and has lived with us ever since. Sadly, she suffers from

epilepsy, and requires daily treatment with antiepileptic drugs. She is very friendly, and we can handle her without any difficulty. As can be seen in the photo, she is often carried by one of my granddaughters. Children coming to the surgery are delighted when we let them stroke her, although some mums are a little nervous and sometimes aghast. Miss Fox has the run of the ground floor at night, the time she is most active, but also runs in our garden during the day, to her obvious delight.

My wife and I would prefer that Miss Fox go free, as we both disapprove of the keeping of wild animals as pets, but her history (I suspect that she may have been hand-reared) and

her medical condition mean that she would not survive in the wild. So she is stuck with us and we with her. Not that we mind, as she is a veritable delight.

David Coffey MRCVS



NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

SWEDEN:



Human impact on farm animals, wildlife and dogs

This report consists of four newflashes: 1) slaughter, 2) endangered species, 3) cormorants, and 4) "entertainment".

What seems to be Europe's first mobile slaughter-system-on-wheels has been introduced in Sweden. Three lorries equipped with slaughter and abattoir facilities are now being introduced. One lorry has a modern slaughter system in which the animal is killed and in the other lorries the carcasses are hung and frozen. In an article, a spokeswoman for the system says that the main two reasons for this is that it is better for the animals and gives higher quality of meat as the animals are not stressed before slaughter. This mobile slaughter is considered to be the way of the future. Some meat producers also wish to shoot the livestock whilst they are grazing. This is, however, according to Swedish interpretation of EU regulations, forbidden, although in Germany the way the law is interpreted makes this possible and therefore it is done.

According to the World Wildlife Association, half of the world's animals have been eradicated in only 40 years. Sweden has moved forward in rating to number ten on the scale of worst results. The ecological footprints are extremely negative and devastating in relation to population. Sweden needs to cut down on consuming and start to protect instead of abuse nature and wildlife.

Cormorants are birds that may be found in seaside, fishing or marine areas, and their existence divides Swedes into two categories. Those who have a "live and let live" approach and those who state with aggressive vehemence the need to exterminate the cormorants. The latter people maintain that the cormorants ruin the fishing trade and take all the fish. Recently in Halsingland, a northern part of Sweden, and extreme act of criminal aggression against a cormorant flock was perpetrated. Over 1000 cormorant chicks were beaten to death after the perpetrators had used chainsaws to chop down

about 300 trees on two small islands. Police are investigating the crime and deem it as a gross hunting crime and also a crime against a species which needs protecting. The National Board for all counties in Sweden has decided to cancel any culling this year due to the crime committed.

The start of a new TV-show called "Hunted by dogs" has been launched on channel 3. People are hunted by dogs whilst trying to find treasures that have been hidden. The show has caused some concern in that the dogs are forced to be aggressive and made to be "fierce trackers" of humans running. The show seems to exploit both people and animals.

Sandra Kinley

UGANDA:



Admiring God's creatures

I am still finding it hard to live so close to the reality of so much cruelty towards animals in Africa. Living so close to nature has also made me wonder at the way God programmed each species to live and care for their offspring as they do. A mother hen comes around daily with her brood of chicks and lets them feed before she helps herself to the morsels I throw out for them. Prior to Christmas, a magnificent turkey strutted on our veranda, requesting food and being oh so dignified. I was expecting him to be the Christmas Dinner for our neighbours, but he is still around and I have come to admire and respect him. Some of his shed tail feathers were so beautiful I used them to adorn our Christmas tree! I shall feel



a real pang when he is eventually dispatched, as he surely will be. I felt acutely the pain of so much slaughter for Christmas meat here.

In November we had another mobile USPCA clinic in our town. The offer of free neutering and vaccinations brought many along. The message is getting through to some. One poor dog (pictured) was brought in for spaying and whilst on the (makeshift) table – on the veranda of a Roman Catholic church – the vet noticed she had a chain embedded in her neck. It hadn't been loosened as she had grown! He was able to remove it, and I have written an article for a national paper and sent pictures to try and raise awareness of what *not* to do to your dog. Unfortunately, the majority of dogs have chains around their necks. This story had a happy ending. She made a complete recovery and the owners were supplied with a collar and leash for their animal. Another victory for the USPCA!

Mary Mills



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF WOOD GREEN

With four centres in North London, Heydon, Godmanchester and Northampton, Wood Green, the Animals Charity takes in around 5,000 animals every year. While no two days are ever the same, we took a snapshot of what a typical day on Intake can be like...

7.00am: The staff start to arrive for work across our four sites. While we ask people who need to bring in their animals for rehoming to make an appointment with us, we are also prepared for some unexpected arrivals each day – these could be strays, or people just turning up on our doorstep, desperate for our help – so we always try to ensure we have kennel or cattery spaces available.

7.30am: A member of staff arriving at our London Centre finds a cat has been abandoned on the doorstep in a closed box. After the ordeal he has been through he is extremely timid, and wants to hide away from everyone. Jack, as he's been named, has no identification chip or tag so once he has been given a thorough health check, and plenty of love and socialisation over the next seven days he will then be able to start looking for a forever home.

9.00am: Our dog welfare section in Godmanchester has its first intake appointment. Sandy is a poodle cross aged 14 weeks and has only been in the family home for three days; the new owner has found that she is severely allergic to Sandy. Although poodles are great for people with allergies, a cross breed does not guarantee a non-shedding coat. Despite this we are certain that such a lovely, young dog will find a new home really quickly.

Sandy will go home with a member of staff overnight and will return to the centre tomorrow so that her assessment and health check process can begin properly.

9.30am: Another appointment, this time at our Heydon Centre. Snoopy and Junior are two rabbits in poor condition; the owner has a new baby and is no longer able to care for them properly. She has been to two different vets with them to try and find out what is causing their skin conditions, but with no luck. They are taken to our vets who, looking at the rabbits and their medical history, suspect a condition called *Treponema cuniculi* and start them on a course of antibiotics.

10.00am: A man arrives for his appointment. He is sadly losing his home so has had to bring his five cats into our Godmanchester Centre for rehoming.

10.30am: South Cambridgeshire council bring in a stray Staffie that has been found. Amos, as he is named by the dog

welfare team, is only about 10 months old and seems happy and healthy.

11.00am: Staff in Heydon discover two cats have been left outside the Thrift shop in a carrier. Shortly after we receive a phone call from a lady who tells us she left them thinking the centre was closed.

The cats have apparently been in and around her garden for the last few weeks but despite putting up posters nobody has come forward to claim them.

11.30am: The next appointment arrives in Godmanchester; a man brings in his parents' two-year-old spaniel for rehoming as his parents have developed dementia.

12.00pm: A member of the public arrives at our London centre with an emaciated cat that she has found collapsed in the road outside a cemetery. The cat's face is covered in a foul smelling discharge, one eye is completely shut and she has a few small wounds which have become infected with maggots. Our vet finds that she is also suffering from cat flu and has a secondary infection making her mouth ulcerated which means it is difficult for her to eat. Our veterinary and welfare teams will make her as comfortable as possible and continue to monitor her.

12.30pm: In Godmanchester, staff are preparing for the arrival of a batch of ex-caged hens. Every two months we take in around 30 hens who are rescued straight from caged or barn farms. Many of them come to us in poor condition and need some TLC before they can be put up for rehoming, but it's very rewarding to see how they enjoy their new-found freedom and their return to full health. We also take in other breeds of chickens, and often have up to 50 hens looking for new homes from our Godmanchester, Heydon and Northampton Centres.



2.00pm: Our cat section in Godmanchester receives a phone call from a lady who needs to bring in her daughter's cat. She explains that her granddaughter has been diagnosed with leukaemia; devastating news for the whole family. Doctors have told the family that in order to reduce the risk of infection for the little girl there must be no pets in

the home. Susie the cat will need a new home so we make arrangements to take her in.

3.00pm: A member of the public has found a dog tied to his van and brings her to our Godmanchester Centre. As staff are checking her over and looking for a microchip they notice spots of blood on the floor, on closer inspection she has a gaping wound on her chest. She is rushed straight to our vets who discover she has an advanced case of mastitis (an infection of the mammary glands) and has recently had puppies. Her wounds are cleaned and dressed, and she will be taken on foster by a member of our nursing staff for overnight monitoring.

4.15pm: Just as our Heydon staff are preparing to go home a lady turns up with 18 guinea pigs! Several of the females are pregnant so foster homes will need to be found for them, others are not in the best of health and will need veterinary attention before we can think about rehoming them.

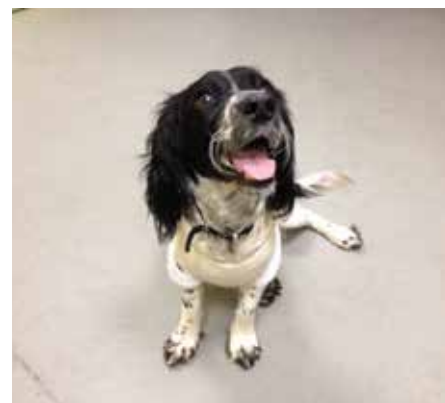
4.30pm: It's been another busy day, with a number of unexpected arrivals as well as booked appointments – sadly this is all too common. Animal welfare staff leave for the day knowing that tomorrow there will be yet more animals needing our help.

7.00pm: A member of public arrives on site with a lurcher she has found running in the road near her home. Sadly, there was another lurcher with it but it was too nervous to be caught. A member of our Protection and Welfare team settles him into one of our kennels with some nice warm blankets.

All of the animals featured went on to make a full recovery, and most had found loving new homes by the time we went to press.

If you'd like to find out more about the work of Wood Green take a look at our website www.woodgreen.org.uk or visit one of our centres and meet the animals, staff and volunteers.

Linda Cantle & the staff of Wood Green



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

In the Autumn 2014 copy of *Animalwatch*, the Talking Point topic is FIREWORKS.

In our province of South Africa, fireworks are allowed at specified times during the festival of Diwali, on Guy Fawkes' night, and on New Year's Eve.

For the past few years, residents in the multi-cultural suburbs of our province have complained bitterly in the media about the indiscriminate use of "big bang" fireworks, especially during the Diwali festival, and on New Year's Eve.

On 23 and 24 October, 2014, our suburbs were again bombarded by very noisy explosions during Diwali. The Pietermaritzburg SPCA had over 22 dogs brought in during this time; the Kloof SPCA had 45 dogs brought in. The Manager of our local SPCA said "Many animals are terrified of fireworks and seldom are animals taken into consideration when people set off these often devastating bangs. Not only is the sound of fireworks traumatising to pets, it can also result in behaviour that leads to their injury or death. Each year, many animals are hurt or killed in an attempt to get away from the bangs of modern-day

fireworks. Some animals are injured or killed when fleeing across roads, some continue running for days and become strays or die. We therefore ask people to consider animals and be mature in their purchase of fireworks. There is no need for great explosive bangs. It is not only dogs and cats that are traumatised by fireworks, but all animals – wild, domestic and farm animals."

Despite many appeals in the media for people to be considerate when using fireworks, we had the worst New Year's Eve (2013/2014) we have ever experienced, with noisy fireworks exploding all around the city for hours on end. As Christians and custodians of all creatures, great and small, we feel that it is very inconsiderate and disrespectful of residents to subject neighbours and residents to loud fireworks, especially in the name of religion. Repeated calls for "big bang" fireworks to be banned seem to have fallen on deaf ears, but we live in hope that one day these monstrosities will no longer be available for use, and misuse.

Anne Hemmings, South Africa

Dear Editor

Live animal exports is something I've been helping to campaign against for many years. This cruel trade first came to my notice when, in the 1990s, it was operating from Shoreham Harbour and I joined the protest demonstrations. It was at the Shoreham protests I was fortunate to meet Dominic Walker (and another clergyman since deceased) who encouraged me to join Compassion in World Farming as a positive way to continue the battle against this appalling trade – which I was able to do for many years and, later, with the indomitable couple, Yvonne and Ian Birchall, (who spoke so movingly at last years' ASWA AGM) and their dedicated band of helpers.

Although much progress has been made, thousands of animals still suffer because of live exports and I'm sure many *Animalwatch* readers sometimes feel ineffectual, as I often do. It was, therefore, heartening to read in Dominic Walker's sermon at Newport Cathedral his advice "...let each one of us all do something no matter how small, because together we can make a big difference."

Beryl Wilkins, Lewes

ASWA NEWS

Animal friendly church

As you all hopefully will have seen from the advertisements which have appeared in the Christian press, ASWA is launching its Animal Friendly Church (AFC) scheme. This is intended to be something akin to the Fair Trade Church initiative, which has made such a difference to habits and perceptions where trade justice is concerned.

The point of AFC is to encourage church communities to take some practical steps on the journey towards treating God's creatures with the compassion and respect which they deserve and he requires.

Bringing the message that animal welfare is a key concern for Christians into churches is not always an easy task. There are those who are sadly dismissive and close minded where animal welfare matters are concerned. But it is also true that there are many people of goodwill who simply haven't thought deeply about animal welfare issues before, or who aren't well informed about the realities

of things like factory farming or animal testing.

The AFC scheme is about both raising awareness and changing culture in churches regarding animal welfare matters. We have deliberately made the actions within the scheme realistic and achievable, regardless of whether finances are healthy or squeezed and whether parishes are flourishing or struggling. Even small changes can have a huge impact in both practical and economic terms; and they have the additional benefit of starting conversations about important issues.

All too often, even people who are superficially sympathetic towards animal welfare find excuses not to do anything which would make a tangible difference: 'It's all so sad, but what can we do about it?' The AFC initiative demonstrates that there are things which everybody can do, and that these are capable of transforming the world. Hopefully, it will give the brave animal welfare advocates in our churches some support and structure in arguing for change.

This is where the ASWA membership

comes in. We really hope that as many people as possible will bring the scheme to the attention to their worshipping community and get their church involved. This is an opportunity to work together to make a difference. More information about the scheme is available on the ASWA web site, but if you have any further questions, please do contact the secretary by email or post.



SWAN RESCUE



Swan Rescue South Wales was formed as a rescue and short-term care centre more than thirty years ago. In that time many hundreds of calls for help have been received, mostly from members of the public but also the police, the Highways Agency, Network Rail, veterinary practices and other rescue centres. Sadly, we no longer work with the RSPCA nor they with us as we do not agree with their policy of using euthanasia as a first option rather than treatment and after care.

Much of our rescue work is in South Wales from Chepstow to Llanelli but over the last few years the area covered has extended into Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Mid Wales, Aberystwyth and over the River Severn into Bristol, Avon, parts of Somerset and Wiltshire. It is an entirely voluntary organisation run by two dedicated people who, all those years ago, recognised the many hazards our wild birds encounter almost every day, and responded to the urgent need to do something. Over the years an invaluable network of individual helpers has been built up, as have relationships with other rescue organisations throughout the country which can be called on to attend an incident if they are nearer to the problem than the rescuers in South Wales.

One of our most difficult and dangerous rescues was at Blackrock, a small rocky promontory protruding into the Severn Estuary a short distance to the north of the Second Severn Crossing near Chepstow. It is a feature which is well under water at high tide; when the tide is out the lower rocks are surrounded by mud of the very finest consistency and through which any weight sinks until it reaches the bedrock below.

As with all such incidents it started with a telephone call – a swan was reported to be tangled in fishing line at Blackrock and appeared unable to move. When we arrived we could see the swan – an adult – no longer in the water, just on the mud amongst the rocks at least 300m away – motionless but still alive.

Having full appreciation of the dangers involved in working in the Severn Estuary, we concluded the only option we had was to enlist the help of SARA (Severn Area Rescue Association) as they had been very helpful to us in the past. SARA is based at Beachley some 8 miles away on the other side of Chepstow but there was no sign of life at their HQ and we had no luck ringing any of the numbers printed outside the building. The tide was falling and as we stood there wondering who else we could contact a small fishing boat approached the slipway with one man on board. We explained to him the problem and the fact the swan would drown unless we could get to him but the man said he was going on holiday so couldn't help. Bearing in mind the problem this swan was suffering could have been caused by him or one of his friends, we felt very let down.

We returned to Blackrock and quickly decided it was now up to us – or rather Peter. So equipped with a swan wrap, a carrier and most importantly a crook which might be needed to catch the swan, but would also serve as a prop to help him to stay upright in that lethal, slippery mud, he set off. The initial approach appeared easy but the last 150 metres was a different story. The deepest mud Peter found was about 250 mm (roughly 10") but he could never be sure of the footing underneath. It seemed to take forever for him to reach the swan but just a short distance from him the swan, a female, showed she was very much alive – she hissed. This was brilliant news. As I watched with binoculars from the safety of firm ground on the bank of the river so many thoughts were in my head. I was very conscious of not knowing what I would do if things went wrong.

It was obvious the swan was in very serious trouble with masses of very thick sea fishing line all around her body ending in a sizeable stainless steel barbed hook buried deep in the back of her head. Peter couldn't assess the full extent of the entanglement while he was in such a precarious position amongst the rocks and mud but it was clear it

was going to be a lengthy and difficult process to free this poor swan. However, what was truly shocking was the fact the bird was effectively moored to the rocks with about 50 – 60 metres of very heavy duty sea fishing line running up the 'beach' but attached at intervals to some of the large rocks by being itself tangled in seaweed. This made Peter's retreat back to where I was waiting for him doubly difficult and much more hazardous.

The hook in the swan's head was just a start. She was unable to raise her head which was effectively tied over her back because, presumably, as a result of struggling to try to free herself, the line had become tight around her body and wings. Underneath, the situation was even more complicated – there were more stainless steel barbed hooks – one close to the central claw of each web with the whole rig firmly secured in place with an anchoring device involving a very large lead weight plus more hooks all of which were firmly jammed into the bird's tummy.

The hook in the head was buried much too deeply for us to remove *in situ* and we knew she would need expert veterinary treatment. Although it was just over an hour's drive away, we decided to take her to the wildlife hospital near Taunton, as it was obvious she would need a general anaesthetic and several days in care. After just over two weeks of recuperation, our swan was ready to return to South Wales.

This rescue was the worst and most dangerous of all those with which we have been involved over the last thirty plus years. So what are we to do about angling? Our exposure to coarse, game and now sea fishing persuades us there are serious rogue elements in all forms of this pastime. But for that phone call, our swan would have suffered a terrible death from drowning due to being completely ensnared in someone's carelessly discarded fishing tackle. And as far as cost is concerned, because all our time and energy is taken up with doing what we do, we don't have enough of either left to compute the cost of this particular episode but we would be surprised if there was much change from £300 for this one rescue, even before accounting for our time and that of the wildlife hospital.

Ellen & Peter Kershaw

BOOK REVIEW

WYLIE

The brave street dog who never gave up

By Pen Farthing

Hodder & Stoughton
ISBN 978-1-444-79958-3
274pp Hardback
Price £14.99

Every now and again life looks bleak. Whether it is family or work life, the economy, political developments (I write this while the Scottish referendum is just over a week away) or



international news that is particularly worrying you, the heart may be lifted by a good-news story, especially one that involves animals. So it was when I read *Wylie*.

Five years ago I read *One Dog at a Time* and learned how Pen Farthing, then a Sergeant in the Royal Marines serving in Helmand Province in Afghanistan, had rescued some stray dogs and brought them to the UK. He subsequently set up the Nowzad Dogs Charity which seeks to rehome street dogs from that land.

Writing in clearly understood language, Pen tells the story of one such dog, from the time when he lost touch with his mother and siblings until, in 2014, as Best Crossbreed Rescue, Wylie won Scruffts. Along the way we meet some of the people who, despite official orders to the contrary, have taken it upon themselves to

make a difference, however small, to street dogs.

Some of the tale may be fiction in that one may not be certain that the events described happened exactly as described, although they seem real enough. Wylie had his ears removed, his tail cropped and suffered other torture by those who, although considering dogs to be unclean, nevertheless wished to use him as a fighting dog. We also learn something of the bureaucracy which a charity like Nowzad faces when it seeks to export a dog to a country where dogs are generally loved.

Not many books move me to tears; this one made me cry – for joy when on the final pages this dog who has endured so much achieved a high award.

John Roll Pickering

20 YEARS OF HILLSIDE: 1995–2015

This year, we at Hillside Animal Sanctuary will be celebrating twenty years since we were founded in 1995 to help and campaign for animals in need, particularly those that suffer in the intensive factory farming industry. Although we are primarily a farm animal sanctuary, as many readers will probably know, we also have lots of horses, ponies and donkeys – 1200, in fact. Inseparable friends, Debbie and Jenny (the two horses featured in the cover image) were two of the first rescued horses to arrive at Hillside twenty years ago. Although, sadly, they have long gone, we have always kept that picture of them to remember them by. We are planning to make this year special to celebrate this important 20-year milestone. When I first founded Hillside, I was often told that no-one would want to help cows and pigs as they had done with horses when I started Redwings in 1984. However, with over 300 rescued cows, 600 sheep and goats, 150 pigs and hundreds of small animals and birds now in the sanctuary, we are pleased to say that we have shown that people are interested in helping farm animals. We have also been supported in our investigations, which have exposed extreme cruelty and neglect on farms and in slaughterhouses. Thank you to everyone who has helped Hillside to help so many animals over the years.

Wendy Valentine

ASWA REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY SERVICE

On Sunday 9th November, ASWA held its fourth Remembrance Service for Animals at the Animals' War Memorial in Park Lane, London.

This year the service was led by ASWA Chair, Revd Dr Helen Hall, and we had the biggest crowd attending to date. We were delighted that Pen Farthing from Nowzad Dogs was able to join us once again and give a short talk about his work. This year was especially poignant as 'Nowzad' the original dog who first inspired Pen to start Nowzad Dogs had recently died and many of the Nowzad supporters attended and laid a special wreath for him.

This event is now firmly in the ASWA diary each year, so please come along and support us in 2015 when we meet on Sunday 8th November at 3.00pm. We hold our service in the afternoon so that clergy and those who attend their own church services in the morning can still come to remember the animals in the afternoon. We always lay a special ASWA wreath at the memorial but please feel free to bring your own wreaths or flowers if you so wish.

Samantha Chandler



TALKING POINT

The price of milk

How much do you pay for your milk? Is it enough? There has been a great deal in the news recently about the plight of dairy farmers. It costs approximately 30p to produce 1L of milk, but UK dairy farmers are currently being paid not much more than 20p per litre. There are multiple causes for the drop in the price of milk, but one key factor is the public's endless demand for our essential foodstuffs to become cheaper and cheaper. Our food, whether plant-based or animal protein, comes from living things, and living things need nurture and care – especially when they are sentient creatures, as dairy cattle are. Proper care costs. Is it time for us to re-think how we value the food that we eat, the farmers who produce it, and the creatures that, ultimately, provide it? Where is our understanding of the value of life, the earth and God's creation in our demand for ever cheaper food?

ANIMAL WELFARE SERVICES

ASWA's Annual Service



In October 2014, on Animal Welfare Sunday, the ASWA team were invited to St Woolos Cathedral in Newport to share our message. We had never visited Wales before and it was a great opportunity to meet a whole new bunch of people and talk to them about animal welfare.

We joined them for their 10.30am service and ASWA President, Rt Revd Dominic Walker OGS, preached an excellent sermon. In his sermon, Bishop Dominic reminded us of the 'Five Marks of Mission' to which all Anglicans are committed. These are:

1. To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To seek to transform the unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

We should perhaps remind our churches of the fifth mark of mission from time to time!

A full version of this sermon can be found on our website (www.aswa.org.uk) under 'Sermons' but if you want a paper copy, please send an A4 sized SAE to the Secretary and she will print one off for you.

ASWA Chair, Revd Dr Helen Hall, took the opportunity while the service was on to spend some time with the children and so ensure that they were not left out of our message. We also had a stand displaying our literature.

As it had been such a success at Truro the previous year, we also organised an evening reception with drinks and vegetarian food on the Saturday evening at St Philip's Church in Newport. We invited local Church representatives of all denominations, local animal welfare groups and members of the public as well as the Mayor, Matthew Evans, and Newport MP, Paul Flynn. The evening

was a great success. It enabled us to talk to fellow animal welfare folk including representatives from the local Swan Rescue, and also Derek Hector who runs a fantastic information service, particularly regarding the badger situation, in that part of the country.

St Woolos made us all feel very welcome and we had a lot of interest from those who attended the service and the reception. This year we will be travelling north to Newcastle Cathedral and we hope members from the North East and others will travel to join us on Sunday 4th October.

Samantha Chandler

St Martin's, Kensal Rise, London



The annual animal blessing service on 4 October at St Martin's marked the 15th year of this special service and was supported by an excellent turn-out of intrepid animal lovers. Intrepid because the weather was atrocious, with wind and rain so heavy at times that one would not have been surprised if those attending had arrived by boat!

The service attracts animal lovers from across London and beyond, whatever their beliefs. Among the animals taking part were some elegant cats and a handsome rabbit named Nibbler. As usual, dogs were in the majority and they were a particularly vocal lot this year, accompanying every hymn with a rousing chorus of barking that at times eclipsed the human vocalists.

Those unable to attend the service sent details of their companion animals for inclusion in the service and prayers were said for animals as far afield as Russia, Spain and Cyprus. St Martin's has a connection with the Russian Orthodox Convent of the Nativity of the Virgin in the Kaluga region of Russia where the nuns have established an animal sanctuary for homeless animals, and a retiring collection was held to support the convent's animal welfare work, raising £279.

A talk was given during the service about the animal rescue work that takes place in war zones and after the service everyone stayed on for refreshments. As

always, the vicar of St Martin's, the Revd Graham Noyce, provided the support and encouragement that ensured a successful event.

James Hogan

St Catharine's, Llanfaes, Anglesey



St Catharine's Llanfaes, Anglesey held its first Animal Blessing service on 5 October. It was the first in the Benefice, too, but not we hope the last, as it was very well received.

Every animal there remained chilled and relaxed throughout the service which included a lovely solo flute accompaniment to *All things bright and beautiful*.

The animals brought to be blessed included dogs, a 48-year-old tortoise and a former battery hen. One lady who came to the service came without an animal but almost walked off with the speaker's ex-battery hen! Minnie the hen helped set the scene for a talk on companion animals and the need for care of the whole of creation. The speaker referred to a number of places in the Bible where we are encouraged to care for animals, and to Genesis 9 where God's promise of protection applies to animals as well as humans when He says to Noah:

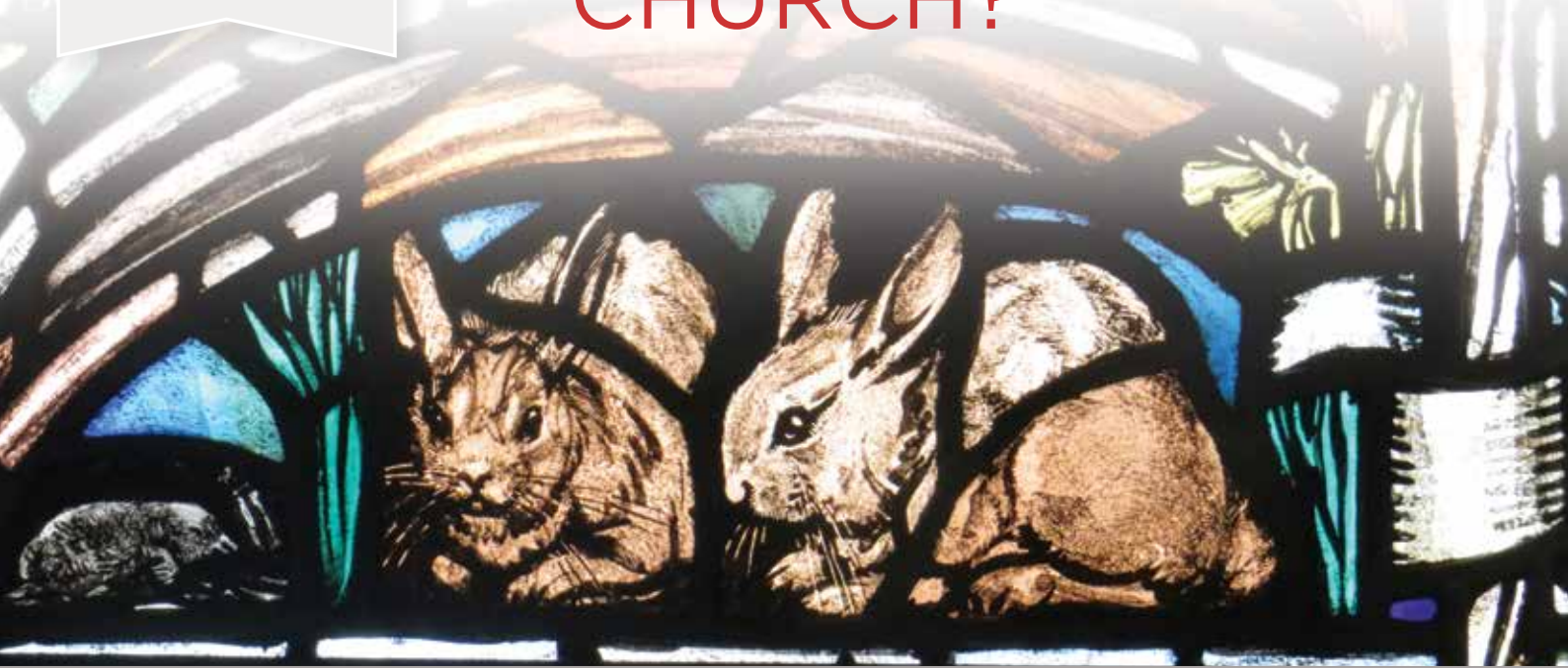
"I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark..."

Neil also spoke about his sister's flock of 99 sheep plus one ram on one of the remoter islands of the Hebrides, where the methods of farming have not changed for perhaps 2000 years and where parable of the lost sheep remains as meaningful today as in first century Palestine.

Wendy Davies



ARE YOU AN ANIMAL FRIENDLY CHURCH?



Christians have a sacred duty to care for God's Creation

The Anglican Society for the Welfare of Animals is now awarding 'Animal Friendly Church' certificates to churches which practise and promote a compassionate attitude towards God's creatures.

Applicants will also be automatically entered into our annual '**ASWA Animal Friendly Church of the Year Award**'. The Winner will receive a hamper full of ethical and useful goodies for your Church and a plaque to display on your wall.

For further details visit our website

www.aswa.org.uk

or apply in writing to: PO Box 7193, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 8GT

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