

New Development Plans in Place!

As we come to the end of our 25th Anniversary year we are delighted to announce that we are now at the tendering stage of our development project and it is hoped that building work will commence in early 2022.

This process started a number of years ago when we had the good fortune to be able to purchase a piece of land to the rear of our current premises and we're delighted to advise that our plans are now very much in place:

- 🐾 **Puppy unit** – located within our current site, this building will allow for mums and their pups to have a dedicated space in the early stages of their young lives before they are available for rehoming and this build connects directly to our puppy plan project.
- 🐾 **Living room space** – our dogs can find the stress of kennel life difficult. So this space will create a home from home environment on our premises complete with television, sofa, coffee table and rugs! This allows our dogs a bit of time out from their kennel environment and for those who have never experienced the great indoors it gives them this valuable opportunity.
- 🐾 **Meet and greet building** – a dedicated building and area to allow for the essential process of potential adopters, their families and dogs to meet their new family friend.
- 🐾 **A number of external runs**, some with agility and different surfaces, to give our dogs the opportunity to run free as dogs should and experience this joy while resident at the Sanctuary. Agility equipment and different enrichment activities will also be included.
- 🐾 **To allow for our longer term dogs or indeed the larger breed dogs** we will reconfigure four of our current kennels into two larger kennel spaces which will give them a little bit more space and freedom each day.

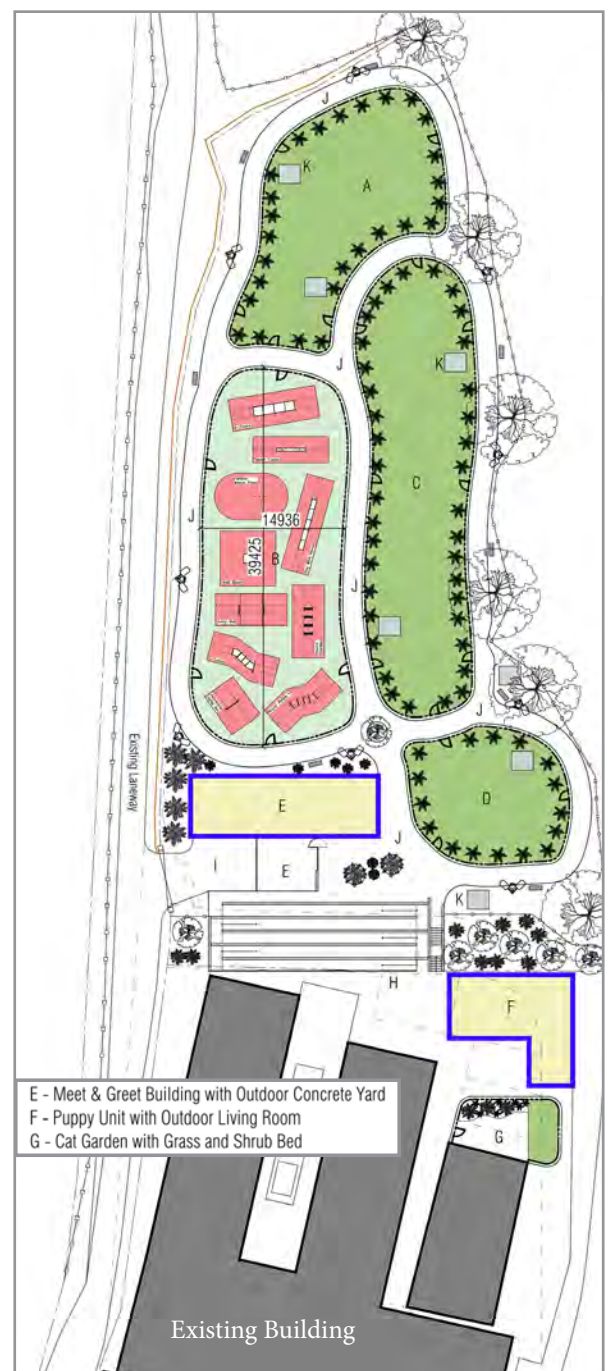
Our cats haven't been forgotten and we will add a small enclosed and secure cat garden to our excellent cattery facilities, again allowing them the opportunity of freedom of movement and enrichment whilst in our care.

I hope our supporters agree that this is a fantastic opportunity for us to offer the very best we can to our dogs and cats; both for those who come in and find their forever home reasonably quickly or for those who have a longer stay.

All the proceeds generated from our Christmas Ballot will go towards this development project.

We thank each and every one of you for your continued support!

Plans showing the proposed new development



Meet Our Staffi Sisters - Betty and Judy



BETTY



JUDY

Around this time last year we were contacted by the Animal Welfare team asking if we would be able to take a number of dogs into our care, among this group were two Staffordshire Bull Terrier pups who affectionately became known as the ‘Staffi Sisters’ - real names Betty and Judy!

At just over a year these two girls had missed out on so much of the socialisation puppies and young adolescent dogs require. Both their temperaments were superb but the outside world was a scary place as they had never been exposed to this environment and normal, day to day noises.

Whilst lockdown was a difficult and a strange time for everyone, animals included, it did provide a great opportunity for the sisters – roads were quieter with much less traffic, there were fewer visitors to the Sanctuary, fewer dogs within our kennel environment and more individual staff time to address the needs to our two girls.

From this the staff team developed Behavioural Mentoring Plans (BMPs) for the each of the girls which ensured a slow and steady approach to all the things these two had missed out on while also documenting their progress and allowing others to assist and maintain the constant and consistent training needed. This included the introduction to leads and harnesses along with tasty treats of chicken to ensure all new experiences were positive. Trips out in the van also helped ensure the best chance possible for future rehoming.

Through time, and with dedicated training, Betty and Judy became less afraid of the roads, got used to a wider social circle of both humans and dogs and began to enjoy the experiences that all dogs should have in their lives. At the end of lockdown we began the search for their individual, forever homes with experienced owners who would continue with their journey. Both are now settled with their own family and living the dream!

A catch up with our long termers

Jet: Our Jet was adopted by Mandy and Andy in September 2019. He was 14 years old and had been resident at the Sanctuary for over 4 years. After seeing his appeal online they went to meet him and found a smiley, easy going, treat-loving hound who just longed for a family and a comfy sofa. At that time it was believed that Jet may only have a few months or maybe a year but when he found his forever home he found a new lease of life.

Jet is 16 now and although slowed down by arthritis he still loves a short stroll and pinching any leftovers - he is quite a skilled food thief! It has been so rewarding giving Jet the retirement home he deserves, he wanted so little and has given us so much.



April: Laura and Gary adopted April one year ago and both agree that bringing April into their lives was one of the best decisions they have ever made. There will always be someone to adopt the young and well trained dogs, but taking on a long-stay dog will save them from a potentially stressful life in shelter, being overlooked every day. Laura hopes that as we understand a lot more about mental health now, and we are supporting each other more than ever that this shouldn't stop with humans – long stay animals may become anxious or depressed, making it even harder for them to find a home. Give them a chance, that's all they need, and they will be grateful for the rest of their lives.

Vodski: Catherine, who adopted our Vodski after a long stay at the Sanctuary, said that it was one of the hardest but most rewarding decisions she has ever made. Both didn't bond straight away as Vodski waited some time before showing her full personality, but once this bond was created, Catherine couldn't help but give Vodski the home she deserved. Vodski is a little princess and as such the journey was difficult – barking to get attention or if she wanted something and 'picking on' Catherine's other dog Max just, because she can! To see the changes in Vodski every day makes it all worth it. Vodski has become the happiest, most affectionate little lady which fills everyone with pride. Catherine worked with the Sanctuary staff and took on all the advice given but ultimately gave our very special lady, Vodski a very special and forever home.



Foster carers play a key role at the Sanctuary

Here at the Sanctuary we are forever inundated with unwanted, abandoned and stray cats in need of shelter and security until they find suitable homes.



Kitten season especially presents an overwhelming amount of female cats who are found with litters of kittens and pregnant mums who sadly have nowhere safe to give birth and nurse their kittens. This is where foster carers like Doreen step in, and are invaluable to us when our cattery is full to capacity.

Doreen, in particular has shown the utmost and relentless commitment to us since 1991 when she started volunteering and then in 1996 opened up her home and took on the role of fostering cats and kittens and looking after our cats all year round, not just in kitten season. Doreen offers a stress free environment for the cats and privacy for the pregnant cats to give birth and allows for that important time for mum and kittens to bond – amazingly, she also normally manages to have more than one pregnant cat at any one time!

The cats stay with Doreen until the kittens are born and then for a further 8 weeks afterwards so all in all it's normally a caring role for several months. Also kittens that have no mother but are too young to be homed are cared for by Doreen.

During their stay at her home, she continually updates us on their progress and sends videos, photos etc and takes on the role of vets visits if sickness occurs and when the kittens are well and weaned, she will take the mother to be spayed and vaccinated. The kittens will be next to go to the vet for their blood tests, health checks and vaccinations before they come back to us all ready for re-homing.

Doreen enjoys what she does and finds all the hard work rewarding. We cannot thank her enough for her 30 years of dedicated service – we'd be lost without her and our cats have the best possible start to life.

Could you take on the role of a foster carer? We are always on the lookout for individuals who would be happy to foster puppies and kittens in the short term until they are ready for re-homing or end of life fostering for our older residents. If interested, please give us a call to discuss further.



Coco & Pups - A Puppies Tale

A tale of 3 puppies and momma so cute
They came to our care one day early June
Barely just born and in need of some time
They took hold of our hearts and inspired this rhyme

We gave momma some food and her own cosy place
and in turn she kept those three babies all safe
She fed them and cleaned them and kept them so warm
She made sure her wee angels would come to no harm

When the timing was right she allowed us to come near
and like her we protected those wee ones from fear
We cradled those angels so safe in our arms
and showed them that we would do them no harm

Coco was momma and her wee son was Ross
He was the only boy so often felt at a loss
And then there was Rhea, like Coco so small
and lastly was Ruby the biggest of all

Day after day they grew big, strong and brave
and one at a time ventured from their safe cave
So soon came the time to show them around
and we started with brushing and different sounds

We showed them the world outside through the glass
and a short time later they found soft green grass
They felt the cold grass in between their wee toes
and soon they forgot their worries and woes

Days turned to weeks and then months became two
We knew someday soon what we had to do
We grew real close to all four little ones
but the time was now right for them to find homes

We had hoped that between their momma and us
we taught them to be strong and to love and to trust
We had shown them the way and now was their time
to show everyone else just how much they could shine

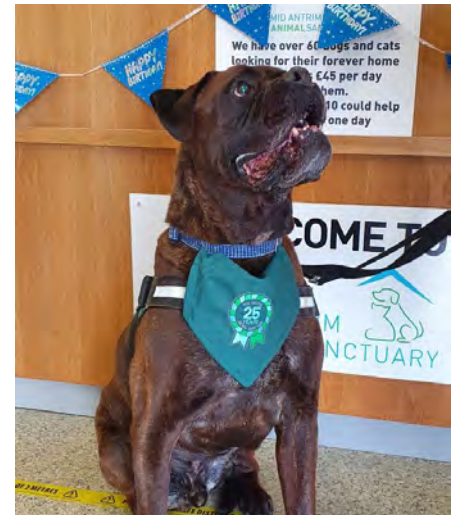
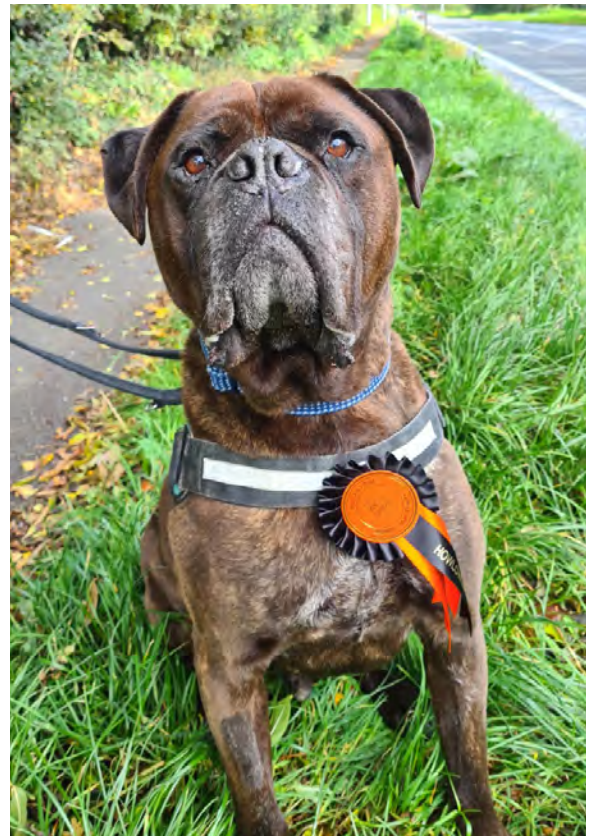


Remembering our Finlay

The 21st of May 2021 was a sad day for all at the Sanctuary as we said goodbye to our longest resident and 25th Anniversary Mascot, Finlay.

Finlay had been part of our everyday lives here since January 2012. He first came to us at 6 months old in June 2011 and after 6 months in a home, he found himself back in our care and he's called the Sanctuary home ever since. He saw a lot of dogs come and go over the years and had been with us through thick and thin. To know Finlay was to love him.....or keep a very safe distance from him! We had hoped he would find a home but sadly that wasn't to be. For one reason or another, the perfect home never came along - but he had the next best thing...us, the Sanctuary team.

We gave him everything he wanted and needed. He loved Dogs Day Out, mainly, because he loved a spin in the sanctuary van, our doggy living room (his bachelor pad), the barn (his studio apartment) the pools (his spa). We honestly spoiled him and he touched everyone's hearts. Sadly his breed, age and lengthy battle with arthritis meant that he was struggling daily and he deteriorated quickly, we couldn't watch him suffer any longer. He had one last cruise in his beloved van, a charcuterie meal and we let him go - Rainbow Bridge certainly gained one very large, sloppy furry angel.



*Support the animals
Support the Sanctuary*

Here are some ways to help:

- Donations
- Volunteer
- Commitment to Care Membership
- Sponsor a long term dog
- Sponsor a kennel
- Legacies
- Fund raise for us
- Amazon Wishlist & Amazon Smile
- Wedding Favours
- Donations in lieu of flowers

www.midantrim.org/ways-to-help



**MID ANTRIM
ANIMAL SANCTUARY**



**FR FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**