**Branch Information for Trustees**

**RSPCA Branches**

RSPCA branches rescue, rehabilitate and rehome animals coming from cases of cruelty & neglect. They run animal centres, boarding & fostering facilities and some have clinics; they offer advice and education on animal welfare; and support with microchipping, neutering and subsidised welfare for animals owned by people in financial difficulty.

Each RSPCA branch (of which there are approx. 150) is a separately registered charity, **\*** operating under the umbrella (federated network) of the national RSPCA across England and Wales. Branches did 78% of the rehoming activity across the RSPCA in 2020, and took in 31,076 animals into their care. There are also over 300 RSPCA charity shops, all of which are run by RSPCA branches.

**National RSPCA**

The RSPCA has been at the forefront of animal welfare since 1824 when it was founded in a London coffee shop, and it's proud to be the oldest animal welfare charity around!

* It was the first to introduce a law to protect animals.
* It runs campaigns to raise standards of care and awareness.
* The Society calls for laws to be changed, improving the welfare of animals on farms, in research labs, in the wild, in paddocks or in our homes.
* The RSPCA investigates and prosecutes those who deliberately harm animals; sending out a clear message - we will not tolerate animal abuse!
* The RSPCA have highly trained officers (e.g. Inspectors and Animal Rescue Officers) to tackle neglect and cruelty at every level and work hard to stamp out large-scale serious, organised and commercial animal cruelty.
* Working together with the national RSPCA, we believe that every animal has the right to be counted as an individual and animals can rely on us; to rescue them when needed; to rehabilitate them wherever possible; provide them with the very best veterinary care; and to find them new homes, either through rehoming or release.

**RSPCA Southport, Ormskirk & District *-* Branch Structure**

The Branch has an Incorporated Body of Trustees **\***, which is responsible for the overall direction and governance of activities to achieve its charitable objectives:

* **Body of Trustees:** Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, plus other Trustees, some with specific roles (e.g. fundraising, volunteer recruitment, Charity Shop). There must be a minimum of 5 trustees under national RSPCA rules (10 in 2022)

The trustees, in turn, directly employ staff and contract in services, for the management, control and administration of day to day operations.

* **Employees:** Branch Manager, Animal Care Manager and Deputy Animal Care Manager, administrative support / reception and animal care staff. Charity Shop Coordinator and Deputy Manager.
* **Contracted resources:** Branch Accountant and Payroll Services, Branch Auditors and maintenance services.

**What does RSPCA Southport, Ormskirk & DistrictBranch do?**

### The Animal Centre, in New Cut Lane, Southport, covers the immediate locality, Ormskirk, Burscough, Formby & Maghull and all of the area in-between. It takes in, cares for, supports and helps rehabilitate cats & dogs that have been rescued from cruelty & neglect by the national RSPCA; whilst finding them new and forever homes.

The Body of Trustees employs 12 staff (full & part-time) at the Animal Centre and a further 2 in its Charity Shop on Eastbank Street, Southport. The annual turnover for the Branch in 2020 was £437,000.

As well as caring for animals, volunteers & staff fundraise by holding at least two major fundraising events annually and undertake a number of smaller activities throughout the year.

The Branch also offers the following welfare services:

* Subsidised microchipping
* Subsidised neutering for those on means tested benefits
* Advice and education around cat and dog ownership

Both the Animal Centre and Charity Shop have a number of dedicated volunteers supporting the Branch in numerous ways.

Further details can be seen at [www.rspca-southport.org.uk](http://www.rspca-southport.org.uk)

**What do RSPCA branch trustees do?**

RSPCA branch trustees are volunteers who shape the work that the Branch does, and are collectively responsible for governing and managing the affairs of the Branch. “Trustees have overall control of a charity and are responsible for making sure it’s doing what it was set up to do.” “Trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run.” “They may be known by other titles, such as: directors, board members, governors, committee members” - **Charity Commission**.

**Practical Considerations**

We are looking for our Body of Trustees to be representative of all social and cultural backgrounds and to be passionate about improving animal welfare. Professional skill(s) are not essential; relevant experience or transferable skills would be of equal importance.

We hold regular trustee Branch Committee Meetings every 4 weeks or so, which last approximately 2 hours. We ask for trustees to join as many of these meetings as possible. You will also need to allow time to prepare for trustees’ meetings - creating or reading through any relevant documents ahead of meetings.

We normally meet at the Animal Centre, New Cut Lane, Southport usually at 7:00pm. However, the meeting times are generally chosen to suit all branch trustees’ availability, so this may be flexible. You may need additional availability between meetings, depending on any additional duties you subscribe to (e.g. Secretary, Treasurer, Chair, line management, being part of a working group, etc).

During the Pandemic, meetings have been conducted virtually via Google Meet and this method of meeting may remain as an option into the future.

Other volunteering at the Animal Centre remains an option for trustees, but should be considered separate to the Trustee role.

Trustees are elected for a 12-month term each year at the Branch’s Annual General Meeting (AGM), and between AGMs branches have the ability to co-opt an additional three trustees, who serve until the next planned AGM. Trustees can stand for re-election each year.

**What’s in it for you?**

There are lots of benefits to becoming an RSPCA Branch Trustee, including:

* induction and trustee training
* the opportunity to gain new skills and develop existing ones
* the ability to use your skills to improve the wellbeing of animals in your local area, and make a real difference to the lives of animals
* the capacity to shape innovative projects, and be part of the RSPCA’s ten-year strategy - “[Together for animal welfare](https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/strategy)”
* access to our learning hub, which contains training materials and courses on a variety of subjects
* the chance to meet like-minded people who share your enthusiasm for animal welfare
* the opportunity to shape the services in your local area
* volunteering is good for your wellbeing
* reasonable expenses can be claimed (on production of a VAT receipt as appropriate)

**How can you find out more and apply?**

If you would like to find out more about the role before applying, please contact Paul Gibson, Branch Manager on 01704 567624 for an informal chat and application form. On receipt and consideration of the application form, the Branch Chair will contact you and invite you to the Animal Centre to discuss the role and conduct a brief tour of our facilities.

You may then be invited to a number of committee meetings, as an observer, to help us (and yourself) to determine your suitability for the role.

**\*** The trustees of RSPCA Southport, Ormskirk & District are an incorporated body of trustees, but the Branch is not a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Relevant insurances are in place for the financial protection of trustees in the proper execution of trustees’ duties.