

Eastside

THE QUALITY MAGAZINE FOR DONCASTER, ROTHERHAM & NORTH NOTTS

Here to help animals

Rescuing and rehoming
at Thornberry Animal
Sanctuary

Verses from the abstract

Artist Nicolas
Dixon is one
to watch

Sound start

Focus on
education

ROARING TWENTIES

Limited 2 Art celebrates
two decades in business

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Welcome to our April edition. Education is often high on parents' agendas so we provide some insight, taking a closer look at some of our region's best schools, nurseries and colleges. We also have some top tips on how you can support your child during their exams. On the culture front, we speak to Leeds artist Nicolas Dixon whose murals are becoming commonplace around the city. We also visit Thornberry Animal Sanctuary to find out how they rescue and rehome animals of all shapes and sizes - there's some heart-warming stories to be shared. Elsewhere, we chat with The Libertines ahead of their forthcoming tour, dine out at two popular Doncaster restaurants and have your usual mix of fashion, beauty and homes. See you next month.

Richard Abbey
Executive Editor



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There to help **ANIMALS**

Established in 1988, Thornberry Animal Sanctuary is one of the largest rescue centres in South Yorkshire. We sent Kiera Wilcox to find out more.

At a time where rising costs are putting a strain on the nation, it's important that we commend and celebrate the charities doing their part to support animals who have been surrendered due to the cost-of-living crisis.

One of those charities committed to caring for relinquished animals is Thornberry Animal Sanctuary. What started as a muddy field in North Anston, Dinnington, Sheffield has now developed into the one of the largest animal rescue centres in South Yorkshire. Caring for animals since 1988, Thornberry Animal Sanctuary has since helped rescue and rehome around 20,000 animals, from dogs and cats to rabbits and horses. The organisation is passionate about rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming vulnerable and neglected animals.

"At Thornberry, we believe that every

animal deserves a second chance at a happy and healthy life," said the fundraising team (FT). "We provide a safe haven for animals in need, offering them medical care, nourishment, and most importantly, love."

Thornberry is made up of four sites. The main site, The Stables located at Todwick Road, is where most of their animals are surrendered to or brought in as strays. In order to manage the magnitude of animals being surrendered, owners are asked to complete a relinquishment form that can be found on Thornberry's website and subsequently put on a waiting list.

"Due to being at full capacity, this is the only way we can manage the intake and outgoing flow of animals. Maintaining a waiting list is crucial for this purpose," added FT.

It is here where, through their adoption

process, they can find each animal the home that is best suited for them to ensure a happy situation for both owner and animal. As many animals in their care have different medical or behavioural issues, they take great care in finding the perfect match.

There are many things that set Thornberry aside as a rescue centre, with one of them being their Farm and Equine Centre in Ravenfield. The farm and their team work tirelessly, braving the Yorkshire weather every day to provide a safe environment and rehabilitation for all species of farm animal. The team never fail to keep busy with the farm being a home to horses, ponies, pigs, sheep, goats, ferrets, cockerels and hens. While their aim is to rehome as many of the animals as they can, some of the farm animals are permanent residents at Thornberry.



“Certain animals have medical conditions or other circumstances that may pose challenges for re-homing,” said FT. “Therefore, it’s in their best interests to remain under our care. The animals have formed strong bonds with our farm team and have grown to love Thornberry as their home.”

When the animals are in their care, their dedicated team, alongside volunteers, work hard to ensure all the animals needs are catered for. With no two animals the same, each has different needs that the team assess when an animal is surrendered or rescued. Each department is committed to making the animals comfortable in their homes, well fed, watered and loved whilst they strive to find them their forever homes.

“It’s important to understand that animals rely on us every day, considering us as their family,” explained FT.

Through their farm and equine centre, the team have been able to rehome battery hens every year, and it is because of the tireless work from their staff and volunteers that Thornberry was able to rehome an incredible 700 animals last year.

With so many inspiring adoption stories, it’s hard to just choose one, but one that sticks out for FT is Arlo. Never having a place to call home, Arlo was found on the streets as a puppy, and spent two years at Thornberry.

“We all desperately wanted to find him a new home, but due to his big personality and excitable nature, Arlo was a lot to handle.”



Now, Arlo is living his best life with his new family after finally getting adopted in December 2023, giving Thornberry a great way to kick-start a new year of helping other animals like Arlo find their happy ending.

Though rewarding, running an animal rescue centre comes with many challenges, and with the rise in relinquished animals following the COVID-19 Pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, times are harder than ever. Thornberry are at maximum capacity in every department and face pressures with staffing and resources such as medical care and food.

“Charities are facing tough times in general, and we have to prioritise the animals, but to do that we need money,” said FT.

That is why support from the community is vital to continue to provide the services

they do. It is because of the hard work and quality of care they show for their animals that the sanctuary has been able to run for so many years, garnering immense support from the community. Within the areas of South Yorkshire and North Nottinghamshire, they have built a strong positive reputation that has enabled them to receive the funding they need to blossom into the organisation they are today.

“Without our supporters, we would not be operational,” said FT. “Animal Rescue can be extremely challenging, and we receive no Government funding; therefore, we rely heavily on our incredible supporters.”

Through the love and encouragement of their ever-growing supporters and legacies, the sanctuary welcomed an onsite veterinary clinic for their animals, providing them with a vet and veterinary



nurse four days a week to allow all their animals medical care they need. The support of legacies has further helped them with additions such as the café and charity shop, open to the public seven days a week.

“Our Thornberry café and deli offer excellent food, attracting our supporters to come down, have lunch, and shop in our charity shop, allowing them to be involved in our work and support Thornberry in various ways while having a great time,” added FT.

Fundraising and events are crucial for the sanctuary to keep operating in the way they do today and change the lives of countless animals. They have held numerous events over the years, from dog shows and horse shows to a sponsored burlesque dance and seasonal fairs for the community to enjoy. With challenge events proving to be popular with fitness enthusiasts and adrenaline junkies alike, they will be running an Abseil Challenge and Snowdon Challenge this year and hope to get as many supporters involved as possible.

With all the support they receive, it is important to Thornberry that they give back to the community. Given the variety of animals and departments, there are numerous skills to learn and opportunities to explore. They aim to provide these opportunities to as many people as possible, collaborating with SEND schools and students, giving them hands on experience alongside their studies.

“Much of the volunteer work and skills acquired by students align with their school modules, aiding them in their academic endeavours and ultimately contributing to their success,” explained FT.

It is clear that Thornberry is a special place for the community, as well as its staff and volunteers. When the time comes to say goodbye to an animal that has been in their care for a long time, and finally gets their second chance with their new family, those moments are the memories that will stick with them forever.

“Working at Thornberry, no day is the same!” said FT. “There are new stories and challenges each day, but we all work as a team to give a helping hand when needed, which is so important and has created many memories in itself.”

So, whether it’s through volunteering, taking part in fundraiser, grabbing a coffee and a cake or shopping for a bargain at the charity shop, you can show your support for Thornberry and help them create a world where every animal is valued and cherished.

To find out more, visit www.thornberryanimalsanctuary.org

