



Presentation at BVA Congress

27-29 September 2007
Belfast, North of Ireland

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Getting the Act Together

- Improving welfare through
- The Duty of Care
- Educating for Responsible Pet
Ownership
- Prevention not Prosecution



The RSPCA and Prosecutions

- In 2003, the Solicitor General confirmed, in answer to a Parliamentary question, that “the RSPCA undertakes most prosecutions for animal cruelty”. In so doing, we act as a private prosecutor. We are not a public authority and we have no statutory power to prosecute.



The Welfare Offence

- Between 1 June 2003 to 31 May 2004 RSPCA Inspectors recorded:
 - more than 108,000 complaints were made to the RSPCA involving 650,489 animals;
 - our inspectors gave advice in relation to 38,514 animals;
 - that advice was ignored in relation to 1,543 animals.



Is The Act Working?

- Quotes from Inspectors:
- “So far on every occasion I have had to issue a warning notice either the animal has been signed over or the issue was corrected”.
- “A positive tool, a great weapon in our armoury”.
- “Feel empowered to make a difference at last”
- “Making people think about their animals in a new way.”

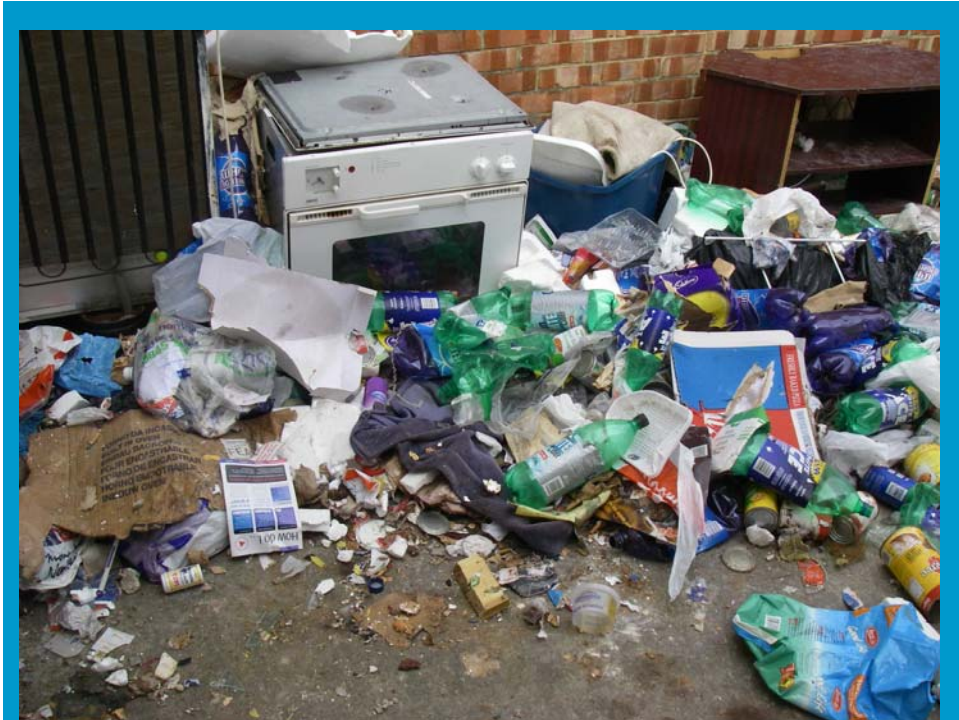


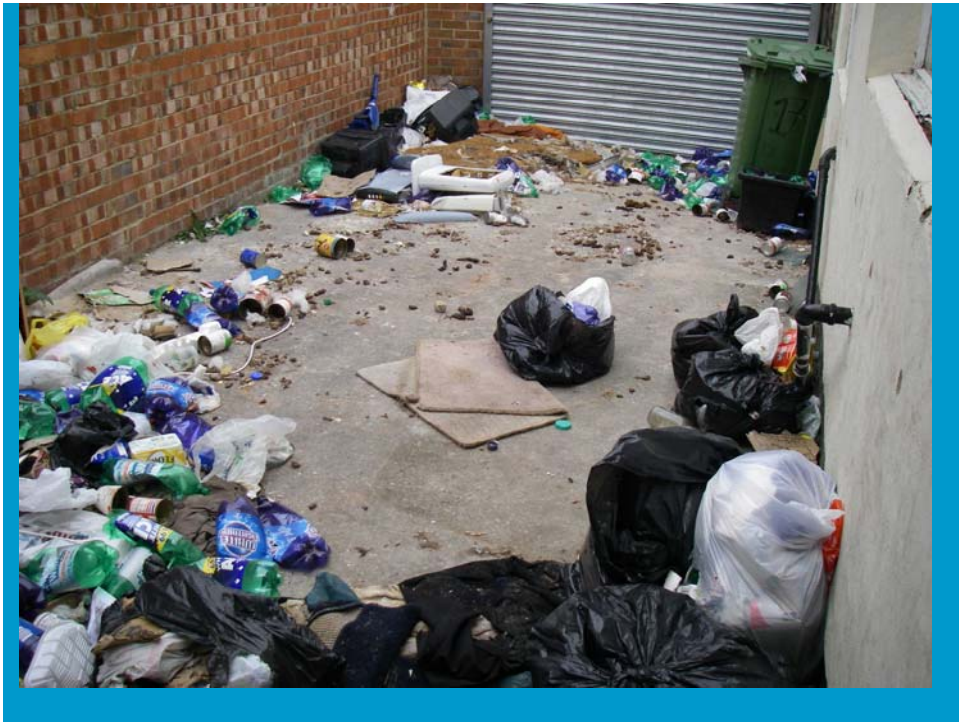
Public Awareness

- Awareness of Act increased from 7% to 54% between Aug 06 and April 07
- No. of complaints to RSPCA increased by 40% during March/May 07
- Complaints to RSPCA in April - August 07 up 14.5% on same period in 06.



A Tale of Two Dogs







Likely to suffer?

- Warning Notice issued
- Vet said conditions hazardous, needs of animals not being met - Sect 9 welfare offence
- Outcome?



Other examples of impact

- Owner unable to meet welfare needs of chickens in E Sussex - majority signed over and rehomed. Rest now have more space.
- Dogs kept in dirty conditions, now in purpose built kennel and clean compound
- Guard dog in small compound, now being extended appropriately



Thank You!

