

# Socelex

## Newsletter Summer 2007

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### Diane Allen

- 16 October 1943 to 16 May 2007 -



With deep sadness, we regret to inform our supporters that Diane Allen passed away on 16th May 2007.

Diane's involvement with Socelex started over ten years ago, lately she had begun to write a book about the animal sanctuary, in it she described her first experiences:

I first became involved with Socelex in the autumn of 1996. Sadly I never had the good fortune to meet Maria, founder of Socelex, but I have heard and read a lot about her and the fantastic work she did for animals. I heard from a friend that Socelex was in need of help and that is where I came in. I was not, in those early days, able to visit the sanctuary, as I was agoraphobic.

My friend Kate sent me lots of cuttings about Socelex and the animals, so I put together the first newsletter from that, and then advertised in a local paper, for people to join Animal friends of Socelex sanctuary.

Eventually, I realised that if I wanted to write about the sanctuary and help in a hands on way and with fundraising I needed to visit.

It was a lovely spring day on March 15<sup>th</sup> 1997 so I decided to take the plunge and visit the sanctuary. Daffodils lined up along the route to cheer me on my way.

Walking into Socelex was like walking into another world, a world of peace and serenity, where the love for the animals is so strong that you could almost reach out and touch it.

Diane helped out in all the daily duties involved in running an animal sanctuary as well as being solely responsible for the newsletters. Latterly, her mobility was impaired with osteoarthritis but she was determined to carry on her work.

In the autumn of 2006, Diane was diagnosed with cancer - she still tried to help where she could but it was difficult what with the visits to hospital and different consultants.

Diane's kind, gentle heart as well as her dedication and love for the animals will be greatly missed by all her knew her. Her mark is indelibly left in all the good work she did for Socelex.

This newsletter was written by Diane before she died but she didn't have time to edit and finalise it so that was done by Diane's son David with help from John.

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## **SAM**

2005 had barely begun, when a young dog was brought to our gate in need of care and attention. Sam, a striking black and white dog had been found abandoned outside a public house! Poor Sam was shivering with fright and was also very thin. It is not the first time in recent years that a dog has been abandoned outside a pub and brought to the sanctuary.



We took Sam to the vet, who said that the he was about 10 months old and suffering from severe malnutrition that would take some time to rectify.

Sam was very nervous and at first did not seem to know how to eat, his food needed to be rubbed gently around his mouth before he cottoned on that he was supposed to eat it.

Gradually he learned how to eat and soon made short work of eating his special a/d diet. After a few weeks he regained his typical weight and was ready for a new home, his he found with Mrs Evans. Sam loved all his new toys and going for walks,

often we would drive past her house and see Sam sat looking out of the window.

Sadly, Mrs Evans had a stroke and Sam had to come back to us. We hoped Mrs Evans would recover enough to take him back but alas this was not to be as Sam was too boisterous for her.

Last summer, a lady who lives in London but often visits her mum locally, wanted a small dog. Luckily for Sam he fitted the bill, so he is happy once more in his forever home. Rheian, with two friends, brought Sam to visit us at Christmas, and he is very much loved. She also brought a large donation of animal food, something we are always grateful for.



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## TIA



Readers may remember Tia the pretty kitten left in the garden next door to the sanctuary in freezing icy cold conditions.. It wasn't long before we found Tia a happy home which she now shares happily with Floss the dog. Unfortunately, earlier this year Tia broke her leg. For

a month, Tia went back and forth to the vet and needed 5 lots of anaesthetics to change the dressing. Tia was very depressed and eating little during this time. Even with a large splint on her leg Tia was trying her best to get out of the cat flap and would sit by it and bang it!

Unfortunately, despite the vet and Mandy's best efforts the leg would not heal so a decision had to be made to amputate. Tia soon began to feel better and gradually came back to her usual cheery self, she began tucking into her food again with relish, started playing and could not wait to get out and about. Animals usually adapt to an amputation very well.

## Update on Judy and Bertie

Great news, as Judy and Bertie have found their “forever home” with Pat. Judy and Bertie are growing into handsome cats. Readers will remember that I had been looking after and trying to socialise these lovely cats.



Well, it was to be three months before Bertie would allow me to stroke him, but once he realised that nothing terrible was going to happen when he was stroked he was keen to be patted especially before a meal, (cupboard love I suspect).

After 5 months, through a friend Heather who runs a feral cat rescue, I contacted a lady called Pat. One Saturday afternoon Pat came over to see Judy and Bertie. At first they ran off and hid, but within minutes started to peep around the sideboard I produced some cooked chicken and that brought them into the front room. I then proceeded to feed them both by hand, and after a while passed this task over to Pat. They continued to eat the chicken offered by Pat, although they would not stay around long enough to be stroked. Anyway Pat decided she would like to give Judy and Bertie a home.

Judy and Bertie went to their new home on Easter Monday. I am pleased to report that the young cats are settling well into their new home.



They love to play with their toys and Pat's feather duster and have wrecked one already. They are eating well and are two very clean and beautiful cats. They will both now allow Pat to stroke them, but as with me, it is Judy that is more forward than

Bertie. They both rub around Pat at feed time. They are not yet lap cats but will sit near to Pat and are in the same room as she is, whether in the day in the living room or at night in the bedroom.

When Pat has visitors it is Judy that will come to investigate while Bertie still hides away.

The young cats had been waiting until the middle of the night before having their mad half hour but have, luckily for Pat, become more settled recently.

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## **Chrissie and Jamie**

On the same day that Judy and Bertie went to their new home, the police brought two puppies to us. Originally the three terrier cross puppies had been left in a box in the town centre; but one of the policemen took one of the puppies home himself.

One of the puppies had a burn mark on his tummy; he may have sat too close to a radiator. Chrissie needed to be hand fed at first but she is fine now, a little bundle of mischief in fact. Jamie was homed first. We had hoped to home them both at the same time, to avoid one being on their own, but that was not to be.

It wasn't long though before Chrissie was lucky enough to find a home with the mother of one of the vet nurses (pictured) from Bridge vets



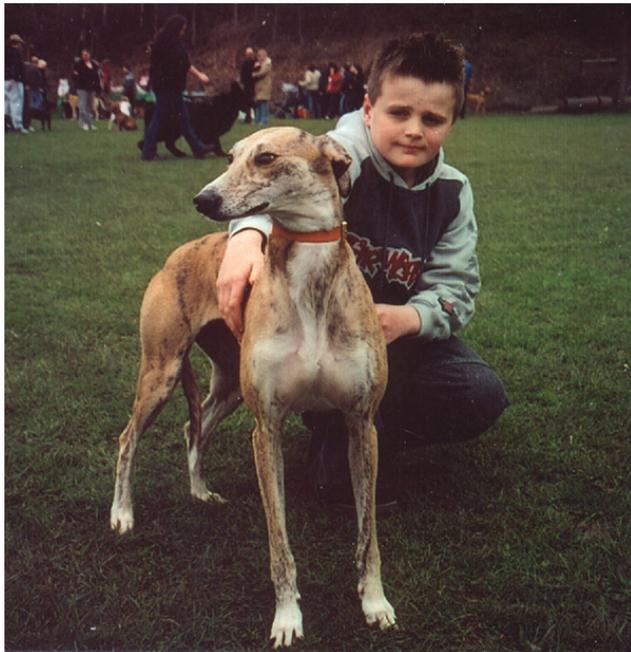
## Update on Scarlett

We went to visit Scarlett earlier this year and she is a darling. Scarlett is so very much loved by all generations of her adopted family. For new readers, Scarlett is a young lurcher we took into the sanctuary in the



spring of last year - she was in a terrible state of neglect and covered with sarcoptic mange. After Scarlett had spent some months of recovery, we were fortunate enough to find a loving home for her.

Scarlett really enjoyed her first Christmas with the family; she was made a fuss by them all, and had her very own Christmas pressies.



In the summer Linda, (Rita and Gethin's daughter) and her family took Scarlett down to Merthyr Mawr sand dunes where she really enjoyed herself running around and sliding on her belly.

Scarlett loves to fun wrestle with James (pictured), who is Gethin and Rita's grandson. Every day at 4.15 Scarlett, who has a huge appetite, has her tea, but

will not settle until a blanket is put on the settee for her to lie on. She is also a mischief. One day when the family were out she was by herself in the front room. They had left a newspaper in the room. On their return the newspaper was gone and in its place was confetti - Scarlett had completely shredded the newspaper!

On another occasion Gethin put his partial denture on a table while having his afternoon nap, only to wake up and find scarlett had chewed it up!

Scarlett needed to visit the Vet recently as she developed some itchy patches. Tests have revealed that this is nothing to do with her previous sarcoptic mange but may be the result of a grass allergy. Fortunately her treatment has been successful.

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## **Tabitha and Family**

Last summer a mother cat and her 3 kittens were left outside Socelex in a cat carrier, the kittens were 3 to 4 weeks old. Tabitha is a very pretty young tabby cat but also very shy. Despite being with human company from at least the time we took them in, and I have been playing with them and talking to them etc, the kittens are still also very timid. The little girl Judy, is now fairly friendly, I can stroke her and she will sit close to me but not on my lap. Judy does not want to be cutched either, but I can pick her up. On the other hand Bertie and Robbie his brother, run away if you try and pat them. They all like to play though; their favourite toy is a catnip teddy on a string. They are bolder now than they were, but they would need a very patient owner who would be prepared for them to become friendly in their own time and on their own terms.

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## **Geese and Seagulls**

This is the latest picture of the geese and seagulls that live at Socelex. The geese came to us as they had flown onto a motorway. The seagulls usually either come in as babies where they have been abandoned and unable to fly or with leg or wing injuries - when they recover they are free to fly away but they often come back to visit.

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## Kitten and Puppy Pushed Under the Gate

One early evening in June last year, John was walking around the sanctuary feeding the animals when he heard a car pull away from the front gate. (He's well tuned into this by now). He got there just in time to see a puppy wriggle under the main gate. John also found a tin of kitten food and a tin of puppy food!



Despite looking for some time John was unable to find the puppy in the lane. He also asked various people who were out walking their own dogs if they would keep an eye out for a small brown dog wandering on it's own.

When John came back into the sanctuary he also found a kitten



sitting beside his car! We then took the black and white kitten who was about 3 months old, into safety.

In spite of his sudden change of home Felix could not have been more friendly and affectionate. He also has a habit of sucking earlobes!

Felix soon found a home with Janice and her family which included another cat. Janice had prepared well for

Felix's arrival with a cat scratching post and

toys. The pictures show that Felix made himself at home with Janice and was soon sucking her earlobes.

We then had a telephone call from the person that lives in the next house up the lane to the sanctuary. Apparently



the missing puppy had gone in there and made himself at home on the settee, and so he stayed. So sometimes there are happy endings

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## Butch the Squirrel



Last September, Ann and Neil brought a baby squirrel, which had accidentally become separated from his family, to the sanctuary. They had called him Butch, and he needed hand rearing on milk and then pureed nuts, in order to survive. After a few weeks of hand feeding Butch learned to feed himself. When the time was right he was released in a special tree.

Special because hidden all around the tree were treats for him to find. Every day we took milk down for him, and he now lives happily in his own special tree at Socelex. He often turns up on the sanctuary bird table to share their corn!

This is the letter to Butch from Ann and Neil. We're sure Butch would not mind if we share it with you:



Dear Butch

Sorry we haven't been in touch, but we have been on a mini holiday in Devon & since I've had some flu thing and been very unwell and today's the first chance I've had to sit down and write to you and John.

The house we stayed in had lots of rescued animals – a Vietnamese pot bellied pig, some sheep, rabbits, goats, guinea pigs, chickens and two greyhounds & in the grounds a wild pheasant and his 3 lady friends were living a life of luxury eating the food put out for the birds & chickens.

The trees outside our window were full of nuts that kept dropping off the tree every now & again so we brought a few home for you and enclose them for you to enjoy. John may have to crack them for you first. There were some of your relatives eating them and burying them in the garden but I'm sure they won't mind us giving some to you.

Hope you continue to do well & live the life you deserve free of problems caused by the world at large.  
Love Ann and Neil"

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## Hot and Cold



The weather was so hot in early Spring that we had to have the sheep sheared in the second week of March as they were getting very overheated and listless. The temperature was in the mid-70s; we had roses in full bloom, a really unusual year. We had hardly had any frost at all this year and hadn't experienced what we'd call a real winter.



However, on the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> March, winter arrived with a vengeance. At the sanctuary, we had 6 inches of snow overnight, the temperature plunged below freezing for a week and all the sheep had to be kept in the barn with plenty of warm bedding. We could not believe the difference a day could make. One thing you can never take for granted is the British weather!