

## Please think carefully before you decide to adopt an animal

Over 33,000 rabbits every year are abandoned or sent to rescue centres in the UK. We are a small rescue centre, but on average we rehome 800 animals a year.

We have compiled a list of the most often used reasons given and we urge you, if you think you could fall into one of these categories now or in the future,

**PLEASE, DO NOT GET A RABBIT OR GUINEA PIG IN THE FIRST PLACE.**

### Most often reasons given are:

**1) Bought for the children, and they are no longer interested.**

The novelty of a new pet usually wears off in approximately 8 weeks, and very young children should not be expected to take total responsibility for the well being of the animal. If you, as the parent, are not prepared to accept the responsibility of caring for the animal for maybe 8-10 years, See solution (A).

**2) Someone in the family is allergic to it.**

Before you buy the pet, the whole family should either visit a friend who has a rabbit or guinea pig, or a rescue centre and get covered in fur! See if they sneeze or wheeze. If they do, See solution (A).

**3) I have just had a baby and haven't the time to look after the rabbit/ guinea pig.**

Yes you do. If you organise properly. You don't get rid of one member of the family just because another one comes along. What happens to number 1 child if number 2 comes along? Do you re-home it? Alternatively, See solution (A).

**4) I now work full time and haven't the time to look after it.**

Again, yes you do, just prioritise. If you really care for the animal you will find time. Alternatively, See solution (A).

**5) We are moving and can't take it with us.**

Are you sure you can't or just don't want to? But we do appreciate this can sometimes be a problem.

**6) Family break up, couples splitting up.**

Sadly, this is happening more and more.

**7) Emigrating.**

Okay, we can't argue with that one. But please don't buy an animal if you are even considering emigrating in the not too distant future. See solution (A)

**Bobtails Rabbit & Guinea Pig Rescue**

44 Arundel Avenue  
East Ewell  
Surrey  
KT17 2RG

Tel: 020 8393 2016  
Fax: 020 8393 5390

bobtailsrescue@aol.com  
www.bobtailsrescue.org.uk

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**8) The children can't handle it.**

Rabbits are not ideal pets for children, they generally do not like being held and can give a child a nasty scratch when trying to get away. Not the rabbits or child's fault, just a rabbit being a rabbit.

**9) My rabbit is aggressive.**

Ask for advice. Spaying or neutering often helps, but there are other ways to sort out your pet's problem and avoid them being re-homed. If you really want to keep them, it's worth a try.

**10) The children have outgrown it, we didn't know it would live that long!**

This is the worst one. How can you outgrow a pet if you ever loved it in the first place? But at least they are honest.

**Solution (A)**

**Buy a cuddly toy rabbit.**

If the kids outgrow it, are no longer interested or they become allergic, you can sling it in the bin!!!

But – If it's too late and one of the above already applies to you, please, please do not neglect your pet. They are totally reliant on you for their well being, please do ask for help. Do not even think about letting it go free in the woods, "it's a rabbit, it will be okay" is not the answer. It is cruel. Letting your rabbit loose in the woods does not make it free, it makes it fox food. It is absolutely necessary for you to re-home your pet, we will do all we can to help you. But at certain times of the year we do have to operate a waiting list as our space is limited.

Most of all, do your research before you even think of buying or acquiring any living creature, make sure your children understand what a commitment it is and the expected lifespan of it. If your child is around 8-12 years old, in a few years time they will be having more homework, more friends and be wanting to go out more and even going away to college or university. The cute little bundle of fur that they badgered you for in the pet shop or garden centre and you bought on the spur of the moment because they "really wanted it and promised to look after it forever, honest!!!" will be on the waiting list of a rescue centre.

