



THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs

media release

Tuesday, 27 November 2012

HRH THE PRINCESS ROYAL OPENS THE KENNEL CLUB CANCER CENTRE AT THE ANIMAL HEALTH TRUST

A brand new state-of-the-art cancer treatment and research facility for animals was opened in Suffolk today by HRH The Princess Royal.

The facility at the Animal Health Trust (AHT) has been purpose-built to treat horses, dogs and cats with cancer. It will also assist in furthering understanding of the disease in animals.

Peter Webbon, Chief Executive of the AHT, said: "2012 marks 70 years of the AHT fighting disease and injury in animals, and the addition of the Cancer Centre is a landmark achievement in our history. We believe this is the first facility of its kind in Europe, purpose-built to treat horses, dogs and cats with cancer. We now have a short commissioning process to undertake but anticipate welcoming the first patients through the doors in early 2013."

The Kennel Club Cancer Centre at the AHT houses a linear accelerator and brachytherapy machine used in radiotherapy treatment, along with a 16-slice CT scanner to aid radiotherapy planning.

The new facility complements the AHT's existing cancer treatment options of surgery and chemotherapy meaning the Suffolk-based charity will be able to offer each and every patient the very best options for their specific case, whatever the diagnosis.

With one in four dogs and one in six cats developing cancer at some time in their life the new centre will help many more animals fight cancer.

Peter Webbon, added: "It was thanks to a generous donation from the late Tom Scott, a long-term supporter of the AHT, that we were able to start this development. His donation, along with that from many other AHT supporters, and an interest-free loan of £1.5 million from the Kennel Club has meant this ambitious project has come to fruition so quickly."

It has taken just over a year to build the Cancer Centre which contains more than 2,600 tonnes of concrete and has eight-foot wide solid concrete walls.

On opening the facility, HRH The Princess Royal, President of the AHT, said: "This Cancer Centre is an exciting development at the AHT and will make a real difference for animals with cancer, here and now. It will improve the chances, for many animals, of beating this pernicious disease.

"Countless other horses, dogs and cats across the world with cancer, who will never be seen by an AHT clinician, will also benefit from knowledge gained from research in The Kennel Club Cancer Centre at the AHT."

The AHT has a strong history in cancer research and the Kennel Club Cancer Centre will enhance the charity's well established cancer research programme. Knowledge gained through the treatment of animals in the facility will contribute to the study of cancers, their causes, early diagnosis and treatment, and ultimately hopefully the prevention of some forms of the disease.

Steve Dean, Kennel Club Chairman, said: ""I am very proud to be here today to celebrate the opening of the Kennel Club Cancer Centre. Thanks to the expertise available here at the Animal Health Trust, the Cancer Centre will provide advanced techniques for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, to the benefit of many animals. It is exciting to consider how synergy between the Kennel Club Cancer Centre and the Kennel Club Genetics Centre can help to further the understanding of the inheritance factors that influence the development of cancer."

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Photographs and broadcast-quality footage:

Photographs to accompany this press release are available from the AHT press office on 01638 555602 or email farrah.stevens@aht.org.uk

Additional notes:

- The Animal Health Trust is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets
- HRH The Princess Royal has been the President of the AHT since 1991
- The Kennel Club Cancer Centre at the AHT has been made possible thanks to donations from Tom Scott, The Margaret Giffen Charitable Trust and The Jean Richardson Charitable Trust among many others, along with an loan from The Kennel Club.