



# media release

17 December 2012

**HYDROTHERAPY CENTRE CELEBRATES RECORD-BREAKING YEAR  
The Animal Health Trust's Hydrotherapy team marks first year in  
its new centre by helping more patients than ever before**

The Animal Health Trust (AHT) in Kentford, Suffolk, is celebrating its first year in its purpose built Hydrotherapy Centre, with the news that the team has treated a record number of patients in 2012!

In the last 12 months, the team has treated more hydrotherapy cases than ever before, helping hundreds more patients back to health.

The AHT has offered hydrotherapy to cats and dogs since 2005, however the state-of-the-art Hydrotherapy Centre - one of the only centres in the country to offer both a hydrotherapy swimming pool and water treadmill in one purpose-built building – officially opened for business in December 2011.

To top off a fantastic year, the AHT's Hydrotherapy team has also been recognised with a Hawksmoor 'Dedicated to Excellence' Centre Award. The award is presented to centres who demonstrate outstanding commitment to their staff through providing the opportunity to gain hydrotherapy qualifications.

The team of hydrotherapists comprising of Head of Hydrotherapy Jo Handley-Howard, Sam Gould, Gemma Dorling, Gemma Reid and Laura Smith, now has more than 27 years' of experience between them.

Jo Handley-Howard, said: "This year the whole team has undergone further training to keep us up-to-date with the latest techniques being developed and advised, which has earned us the Dedicated to Excellence Centre Award.

“It’s great that the level of expertise we provide, and our dedication to excellence, has been recognised by Hawksmoor. The award is proudly displayed within the centre. We have treated 700 cases this year, a number we’re particularly proud of given that everyone in our Hydrotherapy team also has other nursing duties to fulfil in order to help many other AHT patients who need our care. We’re all looking forward to helping even more cases back onto the road to recovery in 2013.”

Animals can be referred for hydrotherapy treatment for a number of different reasons including: spinal injuries, arthritis, obesity, hip dysplasia/ hip replacements and general strains and pains.

The advantage of hydrotherapy is that exercise can be performed safely and gently to suit the individual needs of each patient. Patients receive tailored treatment programmes specific to their case and are accompanied by a qualified staff member at all times, to provide reassurance, as well as assessing strength and movement.

You can find out more about the AHT’s hydrotherapy service by visiting the charity’s website at [www.aht.org.uk](http://www.aht.org.uk)

**Ends**

**For further information, please contact:**

Katherine Lawson, AHT Press Office, 01638 751000 ext 1572

**Photo:** Please find attached an image of the AHT’s Hydrotherapy team with its Hawksmoor award. To request a hi-res version of this image please contact Katherine Lawson.

**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. Visit our website at [www.aht.org.uk](http://www.aht.org.uk)