

Address of Plumpets

The place is Plumpets, Cnr Basil and Evremonde Road, Plumstead. You go in at the Animal Hospital at Shop 3 Prosper Centre, Plumstead. The animal shelter operates from the house on Evremonde Road – just behind the vet practice.

Request inspection of Plumpets Animal Shelter

I offered to volunteer at Plumpets and did so on 27th June 2026. I helped clean the cat cages and put down food etc. While the staff/volunteers clearly love animals/ are working as hard as they can for the best interests of the cats/ and while the shelter seems very clean and well serviced - what worried me is the **small size of the animal cages**. I was told that there are about 90 cats being kept at the house which is functioning as a shelter (as well as a number of dogs – about 10 dogs I have heard), and I could see that many of these cats are being housed in very small cages. I did not see the dog section.

The cages look like **the kind of cages that would be in an animal hospital for temporary accommodation**. But according to what I could pick up, these cages are being used as **longer term homes where cats stay for months at a time**, and I presume that if a cat does not get adopted, a cat may be in such a cage for a very long time since this is a no kill shelter.

The cages are only big enough for a litter tray, a cat bed, a water bowl and food bowl - all squashed in next to one another. **Once everything is in the cage, the cat has no space to walk or stand up on its back legs to stretch. It must stumble over the things in the cage**. There is no privacy or hiding place for a shy cat and no elevated shelves or climbing equipment to allow the cat to use its muscles properly. The cages are stacked one on top of each other.

Some of the cats were put one by one into two cages in the garden for 45 minutes to get some fresh air, but not all of the cats had that opportunity, and there was no free space for cats to have a chance to run around outside the confines of their individual cages. Due to the small size of the cages and the amount of work involved in cleaning and servicing the cages, each cat had to sit in its transportation carrier while the cage was being cleaned. There was no time for a volunteer to pick up or cuddle or play with any of the cats as the cage was too small to throw a ball or wiggle a piece of string.

The owner of the animal shelter, Paulette recently passed away and so this animal shelter is under stress/transition and appears to be short-staffed due to the loss of Paulette. And so, I almost did not report this problem, because I do not want to cause the organisers (or the vet that was Paulette's husband) any added stress. But then I thought of the animals & that I must speak out on their behalf. This may help the organisation to make sensible decisions about the future of their pets.

I do not know if there are any regulations or guidelines for minimum cage sizes for long term cat shelters. All I know is that compared to another animal shelter where I volunteered (Tears), these cages seem much too small to humanely house cats for long term stays. The cats I would think would be suffering stress and not be able to move properly let alone exercise or play in those cages.

Plumpets has a reputation for being a very caring organisation, but possibly they have taken on too many cats over the years and without the funds or space to set themselves up with decent size accommodations. At Tears and SPCA they have walk-in size enclosures for example, with climbing equipment and with different compartments or areas for litter-tray vs food and sleep area. The size of the accommodations at Tears and SPCA allows volunteers to pet and play with the cats, meeting their psychological needs. **But in my opinion, the small cages at Plumpets do not allow for the psychological needs of the cats to be met. I would think that the cats must be stressed and suffering.**

In my opinion, they should downsize and then convert those cages into much bigger spaces. And in the interim, they should create an open area where they allow their cats some free time during the day where they can run and play away from the confines of their tiny cages. There must be options. It's just not right to keep nearly 100 cats in tiny cells like that.

Please can you investigate and take any necessary action, while being considerate to the difficult time that the organisation is going through as a result of the loss of their leader.

Please keep my complaint confidential and do not tell anyone at Plumpets that one of their volunteers has made the complaint as they will immediately know it was me.

Thank you

Juliet Leslie