

Smoky's new home (1)

Smoky was a lovely soft grey and white rabbit with a twitchy nose and a fluffy tail. Smoky lived with his owners, but he wasn't very happy. He lived in the same boring hutch every day – he never got to run outside and there was nothing to do! Smoky was lonely with no other rabbits to play with – he was on his own all day.

When he had first come to live with his owners, they had looked after him and played with him every day. But as time went on they came to see him less and less. Some days his water got dirty and no one brought him his favourite food – hay. Some weeks no one cleaned out his hutch and it got very dirty and smelly. Living like this, Smoky was unhappy and soon began to feel ill.

One of the neighbours called the RSPCA because they were worried about Smoky. An RSPCA inspector came to see him. He saw that Smoky was unhappy and was not feeling very well because he hadn't been looked after properly. The inspector took Smoky away to an RSPCA animal centre.

Soon after he arrived at the centre, Smoky went to see a kind vet who checked him over very carefully. Smoky was given special injections to stop him from getting ill. Later, he also went to the vets to have a special operation, called neutering, to make sure he couldn't help to make baby rabbits.

When Smoky was feeling better, he was taken outside and put in a big enclosure with a large shelter in it – it was all much bigger and more interesting than his old hutch. There were places to hide when he wanted to feel safe and toys to play with too and the run was tall enough for Smoky to be able to stand up on his back legs whenever he wanted to. He could either go inside to a place filled with soft hay where he could sleep, or outside into the sunshine.

There was plenty of hay and some fresh green things to eat and lots of clean water to drink. And, best of all, there was another rabbit, called Molly, who he was slowly introduced to and who he became friends with.

The animal care assistants at the RSPCA animal centre love looking after animals. They want every animal they look after to find a good home with people who will give them all the things that they need. Lots of people came to the centre looking for pets, but when they saw how much space Smoky and Molly needed and how much time they were going to have to spend looking after them, they went away again.

Smoky's new home (2)

One day, a woman came with her teenage daughter, Jo. They looked at the space where Molly and Smoky lived. They listened very carefully to the animal care assistant who explained how Molly and Smoky needed to be looked after. The family went away but the animal care assistant put a special sign outside the enclosure where Smoky and Molly lived. The sign said: 'reserved'.

An RSPCA home visitor went to visit the family in their home and talked to them about how they should look after Smoky and Molly. Jo agreed that she would help her mum to look after the animals every day. The family got a large enclosure for Smoky and Molly to play in. It had hiding places, somewhere to shelter when it was sunny or cold and lots of toys and good things to eat!

Smoky and Molly loved their new home. They were looked after very carefully. Jo helped to look after them every day – feeding them, stroking/grooming them, cleaning their home, giving them toys to play with and making sure they had fresh water. They were very happy, healthy rabbits.