



media release

14 January 2013

**ANIMAL CHARITIES WORK TOGETHER
TO RID RESCUE DOG OF PAINFUL EYE DEFORMITY
AHT vets perform delicate surgery on a Basset Hound rescued by Wood Green**

Bella, a one year-old Basset Hound, has spent her first Christmas in a new home, after receiving surgery at the Animal Health Trust (AHT) to rid her of an uncomfortable eye condition.

Bella was born with an ocular dermoid on her left eye, an overgrowth of normal tissue in an abnormal location. Although this type of growth does not usually impair eye sight, the abnormal haired tissue on the eye is extremely irritating and led Bella to have recurring conjunctivitis.

Struggling to keep up with the vet's bills, her owners could not afford the specialist surgery Bella needed in order to remove the uncomfortable dermoid. They felt they had no other choice but to take Bella to Wood Green, where she could get the help she so desperately needed.

Wood Green quickly contacted specialist vets at the AHT to ask for assistance. The AHT has the largest team of ophthalmology specialists in Europe, and was able to perform the extremely delicate eye surgery Bella needed.

Claudia Hartley, the AHT's Head of Small Animal Ophthalmology, said: "I'm so glad we were able to help such a deserving dog who has been suffering with this growth since birth. Bella has a lovely nature, but the dermoid was clearly having a negative effect on her overall health and well-being.

“She recovered quickly from the surgery to remove the dermoid. The relief Bella felt after the operation was obvious straight away, as her spirits seemed to be immediately lifted. We hope this operation will give her a new lease of life, and that she has now found her ‘forever’ home.”

Helen Keen, Head Nurse at Wood Green said: “Bella came to us through no fault of her own, or her owners - she needed specialist surgery to correct the abnormal birth defect on her eye which sadly, they just couldn’t afford.

“Her owners did the right thing by bringing her to us; both charities have been able to pool resources and get Bella the help she needed to correct her defect. The change in her after having the operation was incredible, and we were so pleased to be able to rehome her in time for Christmas.”

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For further information, please contact:

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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
- **Wood Green**, The Animals Charity is one of the leading animal welfare organisations in the UK. Wood Green cares for over 5,500 lost or unwanted animals each year, with three centres based in London, Heydon and Godmanchester, visit their website at www.woodgreen.org.uk