

# Pet rats and rabbits abandoned in Lothians over Easter Weekend



The Scottish SPCA is appealing for information after almost 60 pet rats and rabbits were cruelly abandoned in the Lothians over the Easter Weekend.

Scotland's animal welfare charity was first alerted on Good Friday when a member of the public discovered 44 rats in a layby on the A68 between the Edinburgh city bypass and Dalkeith. The charity was then alerted to 15 rabbits abandoned on Saturday in the Langton area of East Calder, West Lothian.

The animals are now in the care of the charity's Edinburgh and Lothians Animal Rescue and Rehoming Centre in Balerno.

Assistant manager Kenny Sharpe said, "The rats were left inside a cabinet in the lay-by. There is a mixture of male and female rats, some adults and some newborns.

"Thankfully they are all in good condition despite the circumstances. We will care for the rats until we can find them new homes.

"We think the rabbits were dumped and then spread themselves out as they were scattered over several gardens. It's likely more than one person was involved given the volume of rabbits.

"There are three adults, two of which are pregnant. There are also six bunnies aged around a week old and five ranging from six weeks old to five months old. Sadly, one baby rabbit had to be put to sleep due to a severely damaged back leg.

"This is possibly a case of breeding gone wrong and we are

very keen to identify who abandoned these rabbits.

“Anyone with information relating to the rabbits or the rats should call our animal helpline on 03000 999 999.”

Abandoning and causing an animal unnecessary suffering animal is an offence under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 and anyone found guilty of doing so can expect to be banned from keeping animals for a fixed period or life.