

Quick thinking teenager helps firefighters rescue trapped deer with bunch of carrots

A West Lothian firefighter has told how his schoolgirl daughter helped him rescue a deer – armed with a bunch of carrots.

Station Commander Kevin Ketchen was at home when he received an emergency call to save the distressed animal that was trapped in railings.



But, just as he was dashing out the door, quick thinking Abby grabbed the root vegetables and handed them to her astonished dad.

The 15-year-old animal lover, who has three dogs and enjoys horse riding, knew that carrots would help to calm the frightened deer while the firefighting crew got to work.

The drama unfolded on Monday, December 14 after the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service was alerted to the emergency just one mile from SC Ketchen's home in Mid Calder.

Abby, who attends West Calder High School, aptly named the deer Rudolph and is sure the rescuers saved Christmas.

SC Ketchen said: "I was at home when I was mobilised to the rescue in East Calder which Abby overheard.

"Before I left, Abby handed me the carrots and said 'try these dad' so I took them with me and I'm glad I did.

"I was at the scene first, before the arrival of Livingston

Blue Watch and a heavy rescue unit.”

As a humanitarian organisation, SFRS crews use their technical training and expertise as well as specialist equipment to rescue animals. This can prevent members of the public placing themselves at risk by trying to effect their own rescue.

SC Ketchen continued: “The deer was trapped in a railings and was panicking.

“I laid the carrots down in front of the deer and it suddenly calmed down as it sniffed the vegetables.

“I was able to carry out a Dynamic Risk Assessment and provide a plan for the oncoming crews. When the crew arrived we got the spreaders to move the railings and I assisted in lifting the deer through the railings who very quickly ran away.

“The carrots really did work and it’s a good end to the story providing some good news at last in 2020!

“I am so proud of Abby and so is my wife Fiona – she is a credit to us both.”