



RAINBOW BRIDGE

PET CREMATIONS

www.rainbowbridgepetcremations.co.uk

Tel: 01493 718818



EUTHANASIA: IS IT THE RIGHT DECISION?

As pet parents, choosing the right moment to put your much-loved pet to sleep is a very personal and difficult decision. As pet owners ourselves, we understand the emotions involved. Once the decision has been made, we can offer a pre-arranged, non-emergency home euthanasia service. We will arrange a mutually convenient time for us to visit your home to put your beloved pet to sleep in a calm and gentle manner, by a fully accredited, insured & qualified MRCVS Vet. We offer this service Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, after 7pm with Thursday morning appointments available.

It is also worth checking your pet insurance, more often than not the insurance may cover the Veterinary & Cremation cost.

INTRODUCING VETERINARY SURGEON

Claude Drouin



Claude is a Vet of 30 years' experience. Claude believes that we would all like to die peacefully at home, in our sleep and this is what he tries to achieve for your pet.

This domiciliary service removes all the stress of a visit to a surgery for the pet and the owner.

With the support of Rainbow Bridge, he has developed a two-stage protocol. A deep sedation, by a small injection so that your pet is asleep before gently performing the euthanasia. This method is possible in most cases. All Vets working for Claude are instructed in this method ensuring your experience is as peaceful as possible for your pet.

When you are ready and your pet is calm, the Vet will sedate your pet, (whenever possible) this process is no more than a vaccination booster jab, relaxing your pet to the point of sleeping.



RAINBOW BRIDGE HOME EUTHANASIA PROTOCOL

Our Home Euthanasia is performed by a fully accredited, insured & qualified MRCVS Vet. Once you have made your initial booking with us, our vet will contact you directly to confirm the date and time.

On arrival, our Vet will engage with you and more importantly your pet, they will explain what will happen in detail and you will have the opportunity to ask any questions or discuss any concerns you may have.

Our Vet, when you are ready and your pet is calm as possible will sedate your pet. This process is no more than a vaccination booster jab and your pet will feel the smallest amount of pain, but this will relax your pet to the point of sleeping.

Our Vet will administer a sedative whenever possible to your pet prior to administering the actual euthanasia solution.

This will allow your pet to be extremely peaceful and sleepy before the next step.

Once your pet is sleeping, the euthanasia solution is administered into your pet's vein usually to a rear leg (where possible).

You and your family will be invited if you wish to have final cuddles and the chance to say goodbye. Within seconds, your pet will become unconscious, experiencing no pain or suffering. Breathing will slow down and then stop over the next several seconds. Cardiac arrest will soon follow, resulting in death.

Typically, a peaceful death occurs within 30 seconds of intravenous administration.

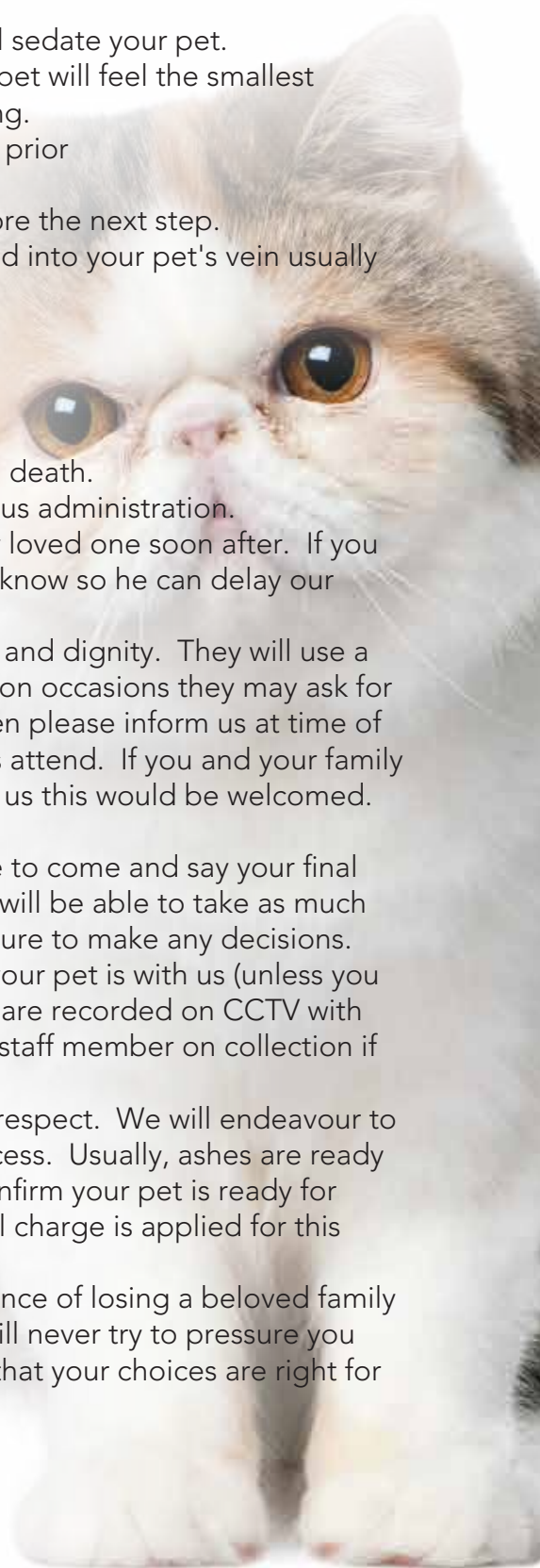
Following this, the Vet will call us directly and we will collect your loved one soon after. If you require some additional time to say goodbye, please let the Vet know so he can delay our arrival.

Upon collection, our staff will treat your pet with the utmost care and dignity. They will use a pet stretcher ensuring the collection is as respectful as possible (on occasions they may ask for help to carry your pet to the vehicle. If this is not acceptable, then please inform us at time of making your booking and will ensure we have two staff members attend. If you and your family would prefer to carry your beloved pet to the vehicle rather than us this would be welcomed.

Once we have collected your pet you will be more than welcome to come and say your final goodbye in our beautiful Farewell Room the following day. You will be able to take as much time as you are comfortable with and will not be under any pressure to make any decisions. A private individual cremation will take place usually as soon as your pet is with us (unless you require our Farewell Room is required as above). All cremations are recorded on CCTV with the footage available should you wish to see, (please inform our staff member on collection if this is required).

All pets that come to us are treated with the utmost dignity and respect. We will endeavour to fulfill any special requests prior to and during the cremation process. Usually, ashes are ready to be returned within 24 – 48 hours. We will give you a call to confirm your pet is ready for collection. We can also deliver your loved one home, but a small charge is applied for this service (variable by location).

All of the staff at Rainbow Bridge have been through the experience of losing a beloved family member. We truly appreciate how hard the loss is for you and will never try to pressure you into making unconsidered decisions. What is important to us is that your choices are right for you and your family.



SOME QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKING YOURSELF:

When is the right time to say goodbye to my pet?

It is often difficult to know how your pet is feeling, so it's important to talk to your own Vet, family, and friends. That way you can ensure you are making the decision based on your pet's best interest.

You and your family know your pet better than anyone else and often it's a case of them having more bad days than good. If medication is prescribed to treat pain, it's sensible to set a time limit with your own Vet for improvements to your pet's quality of life. If treatment isn't enough to prevent suffering, your vet may recommend euthanasia.

We often feel guilty about whether we put our pets to sleep too soon, or too late. These are normal reactions when we grieve and you are not alone in those feelings. Remember that few pets pass peacefully in their sleep at home. Most reach a point where their quality of life is so poor that this painful but kind decision of euthanasia is the right choice.

Helping you decide

- Are they feeling pain.
- Can no longer go to the toilet.
- Experiencing convulsions or seizures.
- Aggressive around family or others.
- Stopped eating or drinking.
- Not their normal self.
- The condition / illness will only worsen over time.
- Financial limitations exclude treatment.
- Palliative care has been exhausted.
- Your Veterinary Practice recommends euthanasia.
- Long term owner has passed away and the pet is extremely anxious and infatuation with previous owner cannot be overcome.
- Does the pressure of family life allow time for repeated prescription medicine.
- Does family life or work demands not allow for frequent veterinary visits.
- Psychologically taking care of a sick pet can create turbulence within the family adding to stress and strain on family life.
- Have an honest and open family discussion about financial cost associated with Veterinary treatment, time off work, length of treatment "is it affordable"?
- Families should consider the practicality of handling your pet, for example are you able to carry your pet if agility is compromised.



What if my pet dies suddenly?

In life we don't know what is around the corner and sudden death or unexpected loss can leave us feeling shocked and struggling to cope. For help and guidance please consider talking to the Blue Cross. Remember you are not alone. If you are grieving for a pet, or facing loss, our free and confidential Pet Bereavement Support Service (PBSS) are here for you by, email, webchat or if you'd like to talk call 08000 966 606.

They are available between 08:30am – 08:30pm.

Should you require Rainbow Bridge services we are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week for an emergency such as this.

How should I prepare for my pet being put to sleep?

Once you have made the decision, it can take its toll emotionally. To help you through what can be a difficult stressful time you may want to consider:

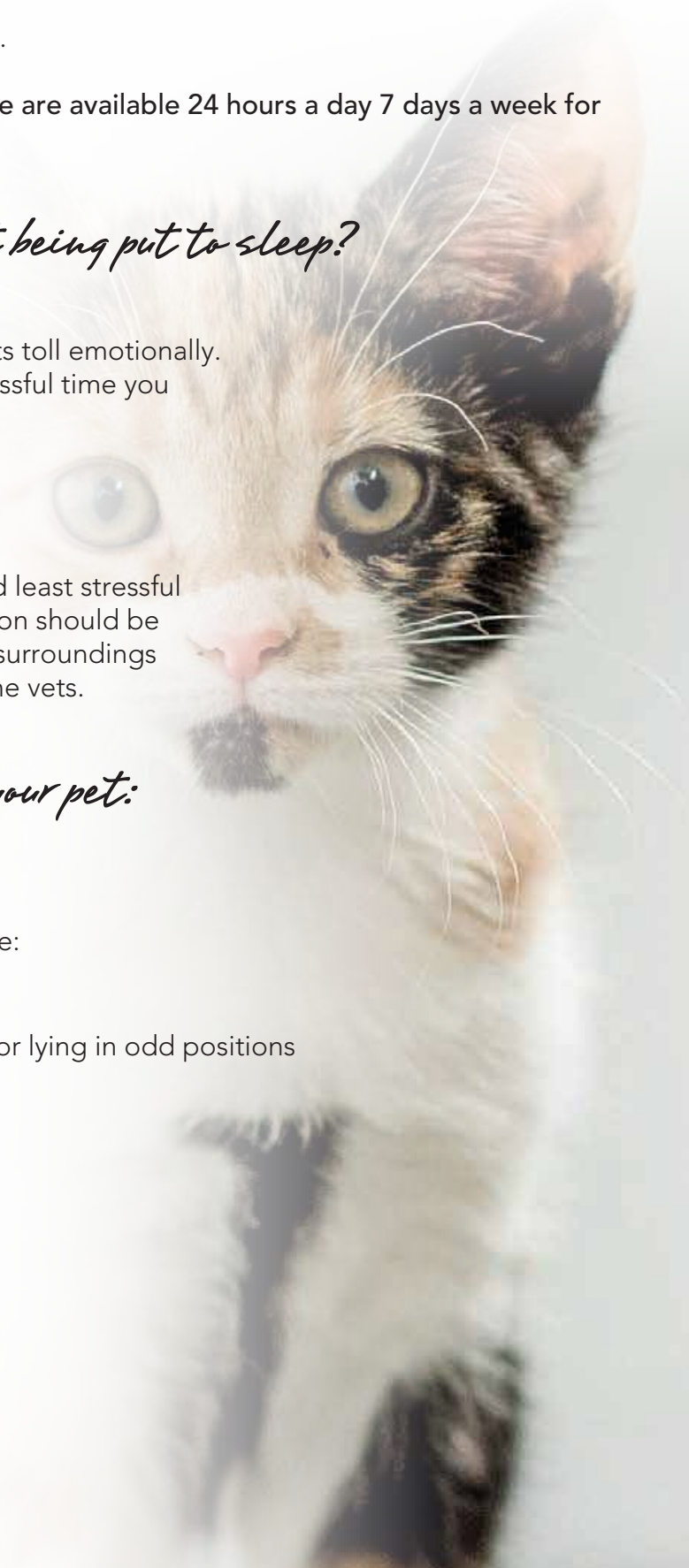
- Taking some time off work
- Being surrounded with friends or family.
- Talking to a family member for support.

Home euthanasia can be the most peaceful and least stressful solution both for you and your pet. Consideration should be given that your pet will be in their own familiar surroundings and will be much more relaxed than going to the vets.

Signs of poor quality of life in your pet:

Pets can often hide or cope with discomfort. Common signs that your pet is in pain and may no longer have a good quality of life can include:

- Being withdrawn or quiet
- Restlessness, unable to get comfortable or lying in odd positions
- Avoiding physical contact
- Excessive panting or shaking
- Crying or yelping
- Difficulty breathing
- Disorientation or confusion
- Not eating or drinking
- Regular or persistent vomiting
- Change in toilet habits or incontinence
- Unusually aggressive
- Incapacitated



What happens during euthanasia?

Some of the events described below may be hard to read but remember that your pet will quickly lose consciousness and cannot feel pain from that point onwards.

Before your pet is put to sleep, we will usually ask you to sign a consent form for the euthanasia to take place. Once this has been done the Vet will begin the process.

Euthanasia is usually carried out by injecting anaesthetic into a vein usually in the back leg, although other veins may be used.

A small patch of fur is shaved off. All your pet will feel is a tiny prick of the needle, sedation allows your pet to gently fall asleep and prevents any distress from the noise of clippers. You as a Pet Parent to be able to touch and cuddle your pet for the euthanasia injection.

A deep sleep follows within seconds, often before the injection is finished.

Your pet will pass away very quickly and peacefully. Please be aware that this may take a little longer if your pet is very ill or has poor circulation.

In the few minutes after your pet has passed you may see twitching or gasping of air. These are not signs of life; they are natural reflexes that occur when your pet passes away.

The eyes can often stay open and the bladder and bowel sometimes empty.

Should I stay with my pet during euthanasia?

This is entirely your choice, however we encourage this if you are comfortable to do so. Pets can find it comforting to know you are with them.

Try not to feel guilty if you are unable to watch – if you are upset or panicking then this may upset your pet. We will do everything we can to look after and comfort your pet as they pass away. You will also be more than welcome to come and say a final goodbye at our premises Farewell Room.

What Happens after euthanasia?

After your pet has passed away, the choice is entirely yours and may be worth considering prior to the euthanasia. Deciding afterwards can be stressful and may result in the wrong decision being made. You will be under no pressure to make any decisions on the day.

Options you may wish to consider are:

Cremation – We only perform private individual cremations (all of which are captured on CCTV for piece of mind). Should you decide you would like to view this please let us know.

We will discuss with you your requirements in terms of urn choice, engraving or any special requests you may have. You are under no pressure to make any decisions concerning urn choices (all options can be viewed on our website www.rainbowbridgepetcremations.co.uk)

Ashes can be collected directly from us usually within 24 - 48 hours. We will call to let you know your loved one is ready to come home.

We can also return ashes directly to you, however a small charge applies for this service.

If you are undecided, we can store your pet while you consider your options and what's right for you. Please also remember that some pet insurance plans can cover the cost of euthanasia and cremation.



What can I do to remember my pet?

There are lots of things you can do to help remember your pet:

- Ask us for a paw print or a cast paw print
- Ask us to take a lock of fur
- Create a pet memorial
- Make a scrapbook of memories
- Set up a little shrine in the corner of a room with a photo of them
- Light a candle to remember them
- Write a goodbye letter to take with them on their final journey
- Write a poem or short story talking about your life with them
- Share your loss with others who have been a part of their life

Is it normal to feel so upset?

Our pets are trusted companions and loved members of our family, it is completely natural to feel upset.

Losing a pet can have a huge impact for some people. The house can feel empty without them. It will be hard at first but take each day as it comes. Try to treasure your memories and talk to family and friends about your loss.

Try not to feel embarrassed about showing your emotions. It takes time to get over the loss of a loved one and although reactions differ you may feel a mixture of things, such as:

- Sadness
- Loneliness
- Anger
- Guilt
- Doubt

Though it's natural, try not to feel guilty or blame yourself. The decision for euthanasia is taken with your pet's best interests at heart to avoid them suffering.

How can I support my children through pet loss?

For children, it can be especially upsetting as it may be their first experience of death. Children need support even if they are not outwardly upset. Talk to them honestly about what is happening and as far as possible involve them in the decision making. Discuss the loss of the family pet, delaying can lead to feelings of betrayal and resentment, be ready to answer their questions, many children will accept and feel better about the loss if they can partake in family farewell ceremony memorial services to say goodbye. Always remind your child that the pain of losing a pet will fade but the happy memories will last forever.

Will my other pets feel the loss?

Like us, pets also show signs that could be interpreted as grief when an owner or fellow pet passes away. Behaviours can vary, but may include, crying, searching for their friend or loss of appetite.



How to Make Your Pet's Last Days Special

If your pet is nearing end of life, it may be a good idea to create a "bucket list". What have you always wanted your pet to experience? If there are certain places you want your pet to visit before the end of their life, then start making plans!

Caution:

Feeding certain fatty human foods may make your pet feel very sick, vomit, or have diarrhoea – so don't go crazy in the food department, but a few treats won't hurt.

And Finally for you...

*I remember our last moment right before you said goodbye,
I looked at you and you looked at me while tears filled up your eyes.*

*I know it's hard to understand and I would have loved to stay,
But at some point, our name is called, and mine was called today.*

*I'm grateful for your loving care until the end
Your choice however is difficult, proves that you were heaven sent.*

*For nothing speaks of tender love and sacrifice to me
Than one who's heart was crumbling and yet still set me free.*

*The human term of "putting down" is wrong it is a release.
You gave me the most precious gift when you granted me peace.*

*So, I will wait at the Rainbow Bridge until we meet again
And then its licks and tail wags for you, the best of friends.*

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions that have not been covered in this information.

We are here to help and support as much as we possibly can.

All the staff at Rainbow Bridge Pet Cremations have experienced the loss of a beloved pet and we truly appreciate how hard the decision can be.

We also understand the feelings you may be experiencing after losing your pet.

Please contact us for further information:

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