

Piggy PM Format

Piggy PM's values are based on the Pigfesto by Guinea Pig Welfare (www.guineapigwelfare.org.uk). The primary objective of a Piggy PM is to raise awareness of basic care and of its importance to the overall health and well-being of guinea pigs. Guinea Pig Welfare is committed to working with the veterinary profession and Piggy PMs are held in association with a veterinary practice.

At a Piggy PM you will see:

- **Goody bags** given out at the door containing guinea pig friendly samples of food/hay/shampoo and contact numbers etc.
- **A theme** based on one of the Pigfesto recommendations. This may be nutrition, bedding, or skincare for example.
- **Guinea pigs** are present at a Piggy PM. The afternoon is targeted at people that already have guinea pigs and having guinea pigs there is useful for demonstrations (see later point) as well as a point of discussion and interest. Rescue guinea pigs are never taken to remove the temptation of adopting on impulse and allowing the rescue to match guinea pigs to people.
- **A vet room** demonstrating syringe feeding, giving medicines/water by syringe, giving tablets. In this room any resources, such as x-rays that show bladder stones, are also present. If the theme is "skincare" pictures of parasitic and fungal pigs etc are displayed. Three or four willing guinea pigs are needed for this room.
- **Guinea Pig Welfare stand** giving out information sheets, selling items that bear the website logo and address to help spread the word about the website etc.
- **Guinea Pig friendly stands** such as The Hay Experts and Gorgeous Guineas. Both will only stock products that are guinea pig friendly and both businesses support rescues and the Pigfesto. Neither business directly gains financially from Guinea Pig Welfare.
- **Fund raising activities** such as a raffle. People need to be entertained as well as educated, a raffle or tombola is a good way to do this providing prices are not too unrealistic. Any items left at the end are auctioned off.
- **Refreshments** are a must for volunteers and visitors. Cake, biscuits and soft fizzy drinks are adequate for the 3 hours but check with your volunteers that there is something for all of them (i.e. is there anyone with special requirements/tastes?). Keep it simple, disposable cups and cold drinks.

The guinea pigs that visit Piggy PMs are carefully selected for handling by the public. The volunteers in the "Guinea Pig Room" have their own guinea pigs and are happy to make conversation with others and talk guinea pig, yet still know when to refer to someone with more knowledge on a subject rather than offer an opinion. It is important that all volunteers are aware that whilst recounting experiences is acceptable sometimes offering advice may be dangerous. This is one of the benefits of having a vet etc on site.

Count people that come through the door. In order to receive samples etc for goody bags businesses welcome information like this.