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## Work on animal shelter begins

**By Peter Townson**

Officials from the Qatar Animal Welfare Society (QAWS) have announced that they will be building a temporary shelter at their site before Christmas, with plans to begin work on the permanent structure as soon as possible.

The land where the QAWS shelter once stood is now bare after a fire devastated the facility, killing a number of the animals living there.

However, the rebuilding process has already begun, and last week group members consulted an architect who is now working on plans for a “steel-based structure” that should take three months to construct.

The QAWS officials say that the new facility will be a purpose-built shelter based on designs in the US and Britain.

They added that the new shelter will also include educational facilities and classrooms to teach people about animal welfare.

In the absence of a shelter, QAWS has tapped its network of animal lovers to raise money for equipment needed for the rebuilding.

The response of the community in Qatar, the officials say, have been “incredible”, providing equipment and manpower to help the clearing and cleaning-up effort.

Community members have organised a number of events to help raise awareness and funds for QAWS.

To mark this year’s World Animal Day, Harley Davidson owners in Qatar took part in a drive across Doha.

With stalls at a number of locations to educate people about QAWS and animal welfare issues affecting the whole world, around 50 members of the Harley



The ground where the QAWS shelter once stood

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Owners Group (HOGs) rode to another QAWS display at Villagio car park. QAWS chairperson Janet Berry said: “The event was a great success – information boards, balloons and animal welfare posters all helped raise awareness. The QAWS team would like to thank all the bikers.”

A tabletop sale organised by the groups such as Kids and Babies Doha, Expats Mums and Kids, Expat Woman Qatar and the Qatar Living Mums in Doha group and a Faisaliya Fiesta fundraiser also raised a substantial amount of money towards building material for the new facility.

Despite not having any kennels, QAWS remains in need of volunteers.

With 20 dogs that need a place to stay, QAWS is seeking prospective short-term foster carers as well as folks looking to adopt pets long term.

Adoptions co-ordinator Kelly Allen explained that because of the lack of a shelter, QAWS also have an issue with catering to the need of the stray animal population in Qatar.

“We are still being contacted on a daily basis regarding animals in need, so we need a database of foster homes that will be available over the next few months for new rescue cases,” she said, adding that “even if we do not have a suitable rescue for you to adopt immediately, we may do in the near future!”

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