



I Love My Island Dog Association's adoption centre officially opened in Chevrise with an informal opening ceremony on Sunday.

Adoption Centre officially opens in French Cul-de-Sac

MARIGOT-I Love My Island Dog's Adoption Centre officially opened in Chevrise Sunday afternoon with a gathering of invited guests, who included volunteers, board members, veterinarians, animal lovers and others who had helped bring the centre to fruition.

Representatives from Animals 'R' Friends and Animal Welfare from the Dutch side were also present, as were Gendarmes and their dog trainer and artists who participated in the decoration of the shelter. The event was sponsored by Vinissimo and dog food supplier Pedigree.

The centre is designed in the form of a compound and is located in a quiet area close to Chevrise Pond on a plot of land donated by the Collectivité. Office, dayroom, food storerooms, etc. are housed in a colourfully painted 40ft container, while adjacent to the container is an enclosure protected from the elements, housing seven animal pens. The centre sells T-shirts and also has a library with a collection of books, CDs and DVDs for sale.

In front, a large space of land enclosed by a fence allows dogs waiting for adoption to roam and exercise in

safety.

Association president Ursula Oppikofer thanked all those who contributed to the completion of the centre or who donated materials. She especially thanked the Collectivité without whose financial contribution the centre might not have materialised, adding "their doors were always open to our needs."

Vice-President Pierre Aliotti, who was also present, welcomed the facility, describing its function as a "win-win" situation for everyone.

"The I Love My Island Dog Association is the only

one to have created a true shelter on the island and they are doing a great job," he noted. "Before we had possibilities for adoption, the dog pound was putting down up to 400 dogs a year. Now adoption and sterilisation campaigns help to reduce the number of strays and that's better for the dog pound, the Collectivité and the public. Everyone benefits."

Oppikofer said the difference was already being felt, with the dog pound putting down 120 dogs in 2009.

"Our goal is not to have a dog pound at all," she added. "If people would watch their dogs all the time, there would be no need for a pound and no poisonings."

The centre, located off the main road between Orient Bay and Grand Case, next to Coconut Car Rental, is open daily from 4:00pm until 6:00pm and closed Sundays. Every Saturday is Adoption Day from 11:00am until 5:00pm.