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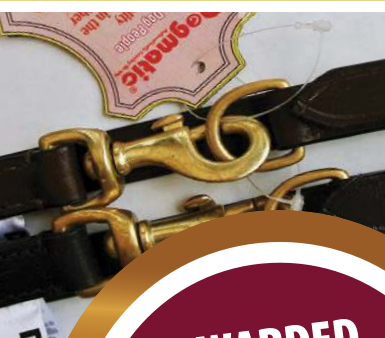
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Editor's letter

If you're a print magazine subscriber to Your Dog, you'll have already received your shiny new Your Dog Membership card with this issue of the magazine — the key to hundreds of discounts on dog-friendly attractions, products, services, and more. The membership represents an extension of the Your Dog brand — not only does Your Dog provide great reading, in the shape of your favourite, best-selling magazine, but now it also brings you great offers, so you can connect with the dog-loving community, enjoy more outings and experiences with your pet, and generally get more out of life together.

If you're not a print subscriber at present, don't despair. If you turn to page 50, you'll

find full details of our latest subscription offer, which includes the Your Dog Membership as well as your magazine. And if you don't want to commit to a full year's worth of magazines, you can still enjoy the perks of membership and four membership special issues of Your Dog.

Once you've got that sorted, you can sit back and enjoy the mag. And don't forget to check out page 68, where you'll find all our membership offers listed — then get on and plan that next great adventure! Happy days!

Sarah Wright
Editor



Image: Mark Taylor, Warren Photographic Ltd.

★ WHO'S ON THE COVER THIS MONTH?

Meet Nala, a two-year-old Pomapoo (Toy Poodle X Pomeranian) from Kings Cliffe, Northamptonshire.

Owner Jade Cunnington said of her: "Nala is a cheeky little diva, and beneath the surface, she's very intelligent."

"She loves a walk, and for a dog weighing just 3.3kg you'd be surprised — nothing excites her more than a long walk and muddy puddles!"

"She is also a massive foodie; she loves to eat and is rarely fussy. Finally, Nala loves to learn new things, such as tricks!"

"Nala and I have done a lot together, which I'm so proud of! But our best achievement is to be able to call her an agility dog. Nala is so energetic and a trainer friend suggested we try agility. I thought we would be laughed at, but I was amazed at the inclusion of the sport. I was astounded by how much Nala enjoyed it, and how easily she picked it up! This year we are beginning to compete and we are so excited for the future!"

THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO THIS MONTH...

CONTRIBUTOR TONY CRUSE

"If you see me out walking my dogs, you'll often notice a camera. April is the perfect time to grab those spring snaps. Easter daffodils and fields of bluebells are always worth photographing. To make the picture complete, ask your dog to sit nearby, and you'll have the perfect photo!"



CONTRIBUTOR STEPHEN JENKINSON

"Dog walks in daylight until 8pm! After our limited winter daylight here in Orkney, it feels like summer once the clocks go forward!"



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Cover pic: Toy Poodle X Pomeranian Nala by Mark Taylor, Warren Photographic Ltd.

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IS ONE DOG ENOUGH?
— **PAGE 12**



WATCH AND LEARN
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DOG BEACH BANS SET FOR REVAMP

Cornwall Council's plans to relax the county's rules limiting dogs on beaches have been welcomed by the Kennel Club.

Following a wide-ranging public consultation last summer, the council has announced that the current complex restrictions on dog walkers accessing its beaches will be overhauled to bring local variations into line.

The survey attracted the largest ever response, with more than 13,000 people putting forward their views.

Under the new proposals, all beaches,

except those with a Blue Flag, would have the Easter to September bans lifted, and replaced with restrictions from July 1 to August 31, between 10am and 5pm only.

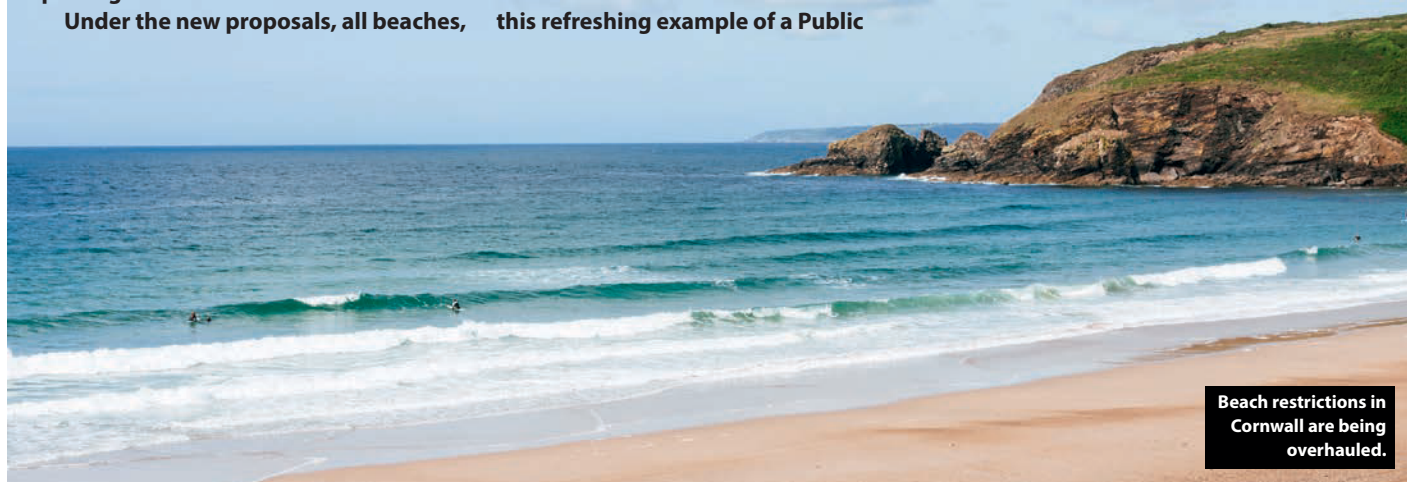
It's hoped the new rules will be in place by the summer, making beach access with dogs far simpler for residents and visitors to understand.

However, if owners don't pick up after their dogs, the situation is likely to be reviewed again in the winter.

"We commend Cornwall Council for this refreshing example of a Public

Space Protection Order (PSPO) that takes into account the importance of beach access for owners to provide their dogs with the exercise and stimulation they need," said Holly Conway, the Kennel Club's head of public affairs.

"We wish to thank all the dog lovers who responded to the petition. As ever, impassioned responses like this are crucial in ensuring that proposed PSPOs are sensitive to the unique needs of the dog-owning community."



Beach restrictions in Cornwall are being overhauled.

Vets save pup who ate Bourbon biscuits

PDSA vets have saved a 15-week-old puppy after she wolfed down a double pack of Bourbon biscuits containing a potentially lethal dose of chocolate.

Zeena was rushed to Bournemouth PDSA Pet Hospital after her owner, Jo Higgs, 44, discovered the empty packet on the kitchen floor.

"I didn't realise Bourbon biscuits could be so dangerous for dogs, but when she started acting strangely and her tummy appeared bloated, I knew something was horribly wrong," said Jo, from Boscombe, Dorset.

PDSA vet Paul Cossey gave Zeena medication to make her sick and prevent further absorption of theobromine, the chemical in chocolate that can prove fatal.

Next, the poorly pup was placed on

a drip to flush any remaining toxins out of her system, before being transferred to out-of-hours provider Vets Now for close monitoring overnight.

"Zeena had eaten three grams of chocolate, which could have killed her without treatment," explained Paul, who added that just a small bar of dark chocolate would be toxic for a small dog like a Yorkshire Terrier.

Jo is keen to warn other owners of the dangers posed to their pets by biscuits containing chocolate.

"I was terrified Zeena wasn't going to make it," she added. "I can't thank the team at PDSA enough for saving her."

Right: Zeena needed life-saving treatment after devouring a double pack of Bourbon biscuits.



SOCK IT TO'EM!

An RSPCA hospital, which issued an appeal for baby socks to help animals recovering from operations, has been inundated with supplies from kind-hearted supporters.

RSPCA Putney Animal Hospital, in south west London, put a call-out for these unusual paw protectors to keep poorly rabbits, cats, and dogs warm after they come round

from anaesthetic. Baby socks are, apparently, just the job to prevent heat loss through pets' pads post-surgery.

The hospital has even used these versatile garments to make jumpsuits for tiny hand-reared kittens to prevent them from becoming sore if they try to suckle on each other.

Soap star rehomes second smuggled puppy

'Coronation Street' actor Daniel Brocklebank has adopted another victim of the cruel puppy smuggling trade; four-month-old Dachshund Karen-Jean.

Illegally brought into the UK from Poland with her littermates, Karen-Jean will now have to share the limelight with Daniel's other Dachshund, Colin, also adopted from Dogs Trust Manchester. Colin was smuggled 1,000 miles from Hungary in horrendous conditions before Daniel rehomed him last March.

The actor, who plays Billy Mayhew in the long-running ITV soap, is backing Dogs Trust's 'Don't Be Dogfished' campaign, which aims to prevent pet lovers falling victim to deceitful puppy sellers online.

Statistics from the country's leading canine charity reveal 21 per cent of puppy buyers believe they were conned — or 'dogfished' — into buying an illegally imported puppy, leaving many heartbroken and, on average, £500 out of pocket.

The campaign is about urging potential new owners to protect themselves by visiting the puppy and mother at their home more than once, ensuring the paperwork is correct, and walking away if they feel pressured into buying.



Daniel and Karen-Jean.

"Both Karen-Jean and Colin had really tough starts in life," explained Daniel. "Sadly, not every smuggled puppy is as lucky as they are. It's so easy to buy a dog online nowadays, but not every seller can be trusted. I'm excited to watch Colin and Karen-Jean play together and form a bond — they've definitely found their forever home with me."

DOG DATA

According to a report by airport transfer reservation system Taxi2airport.com, Italy has more pet-friendly hotels (18,176) than any other European country.

It's a Date

WHAT'S ON IN APRIL?

● **April 18: 6pm – 8pm: Barking Mad at the Bloomsbury — Dog Friendly Comedy, Bloomsbury Studio, 15 Gordon Street, London WC1H 0AH.**

Don't miss this chance to enjoy an evening of entertainment, courtesy of six of the best comedians on the circuit performing stand-up with their dogs. Bring your own canine companion along too for this charity night in aid of Battersea Dogs & Cats Home.

● **Cost: £12 per person; £5 per dog.**

● **More info and to book: www.ucl.ac.uk/event-ticketing/bloomsbury-theatre-studio-events**

● **April 18 – 19: 9.30am – 5pm: All About Dogs, Newbury Showground, Priors Court, Hermitage, Thatcham, Berkshire RG18 9QZ.**

Organised by dog lovers for dog lovers, this bumper canine event features a packed programme of fun dog shows, competitions, have-a-go activities, arena displays, K9 Aqua Sports, Britain's Got Talent's Lucy Heath and Trip Hazard, lure racing, agility, obedience, Insta-POOCH, recall challenge, steeplechase, training tips, behaviour advice, trade stands, and live music and entertainment.

● **Cost: Adults: £12 (online), £14 (on the gate); children: £6.50 (online), £8 (on the gate); over 60s: £11.50 (online), £13.50 (on the gate); under fives: free.**

● **More info: www.allaboutdogsshow.co.uk/newbury/**

● **April 25 – 26: 9.30am – 5pm: All About Dogs, Newark Showground, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG24 2NY.**

This 'pawfect' day out for you and your dog is set to be the biggest canine event in the East Midlands. Enjoy K9 Aqua Sports, fun dog shows, scurry bandits, Kennel Club Good Citizen bronze tests, hoopers, obedience, Insta-POOCH, agility, Britain's Got Talent's Lucy Heath and Trip Hazard, flyball, steeplechase, tombola dash, recall challenge, training and behaviour advice, and trade stands.

● **Cost: Adults: £12 (online), £14 (on the gate); children: £6.50 (online), £8 (on the gate); over 60s: £11.50 (online), £13.50 (on the gate); under fives: free.**

● **More info: www.allaboutdogsshow.co.uk/newark/**



MARC ABRAHAM

The celebrity vet, founder of PupAid and the #LucysLaw campaign against puppy farming, and author of new book, 'Lucy's Law — the story of a little dog who changed the world' looks back on a rollercoaster decade...

Q It's been a whirlwind 10 years, consisting of many highs and lows, before Lucy's Law (which will ban the sale of kittens and puppies by third parties and comes into effect this month) came to fruition — what have been the key moments for you? "We were at our lowest ebb in January 2017, following Lucy's death in December, and facing so many barriers, obstructions, and organisations blocking us behind the scenes, and naysayers. But February 8, 2018 — the day the Government announced the call for evidence — was a political landmark for us. After working so hard behind the scenes for so many years, at last we knew the tide was turning in our favour and we were able to go into Number 10 and neutralise every single argument. It's worth noting that Michael Gove's appointment as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs was a huge turning point. He was responsible for the change



Image: Marc Abraham.

in attitude — all it took was a fresh pair of eyes and a proactive person. Before, working with Defra was like being in a bureaucratic swamp.

"Another key highlight was seeing the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, and his partner Carrie Symonds' adopted dog — a victim of third-party puppy sales — running around wearing our Lucy's Law rosette. Dilyn was another powerful messenger for our campaign."

Q You've won an array of awards; which one stands out the most? "They've all been amazing — each one has served to shine a light on what grassroots campaigners can achieve. Every single award — including the most recent Daily Point of Light Award from the Prime

ABOUT MARC

Marc Abraham qualified as a vet at Edinburgh University in 1995. He is a regular guest on BBC Breakfast, ITV's 'This Morning' and Sky News, and writes for the Huffington Post. Marc is an active animal welfare campaigner in Westminster, fronts campaigns all over the world, is ambassador for several animal charities, and has won numerous awards for his work.

Minister — has been for little Lucy and the 2013 core team of Linda and Sue, Julia, Sarah, Philippa, Lisa (Lucy's owner) and 'The Mirror's' Andrew Penman. The awards are recognition of everything they sacrificed.

Q Be honest — is the book all your own work or did Mirror Books draft in a ghost writer?

"The book had been in my head for ages but on October 1, 2019, I sat down, locked the door, and was a total recluse for three and a half months while I bashed out 97,000 words. I set myself a strict routine and was very disciplined. I got up at 6am, went swimming, bought all my food for the next 24 hours, and had garlic mushrooms on toast for breakfast. Then I would write solidly from 8am to 1pm, by which time my brain was mush, so I would watch the news, then answer emails."

Q Lucy — and her memory — has taken so many people on such an amazing journey. When you look back, it must be sobering to think of the difference one little dog and

News

HOUND-UP

SMART HARNESS DETECTS CANINE EMOTIONS

A Japanese startup has invented a harness that makes it easier for owners to tell if their dog is happy or sad.

Created by engineer Joji Yamaguchi of Inupathy, the device analyses variations in heart rate, translating this into colour coded signals that correspond with one of five emotional states.

The padded clip-on harness can take readings on dogs of all sizes and through thick fur, and syncs with a smartphone app, which also suggests games to play depending on how the dog is feeling.



The Davies team with their big cheque.

FREEDOM PROJECT BENEFITS TO THE TUNE OF 5K

Hertfordshire-based small animal referral practice, Davies Veterinary Specialists, has donated £5,000 to its chosen charity of 2019, the Dogs Trust Freedom Project.

This innovative pet fostering scheme provides vital help for people fleeing domestic abuse who are unable to take their pets with them. In 15 years, the project

has provided free and confidential foster care for more than 1,500 dogs and helped 1,400-plus people.

"We are very grateful to the team at Davies for their support of the Freedom Project," said Amy Hyde, outreach projects manager at Dogs Trust.

The Davies team is currently gearing up to raise funds for its nominated 2020 charity, Dogs on the Street (DOTS).

NEW PODCAST FOR ANIMAL LOVERS

The British College of Veterinary Specialists (BCVSp) has launched the Your Vet Specialist podcast series to enable animal owners to listen and learn from high-quality audible veterinary content while on the go.

BCVSp trustee Myra Forster-van Hijfte, who is responsible for Your Vet Specialist's

a small band of campaigners have made to animal rights in the UK.

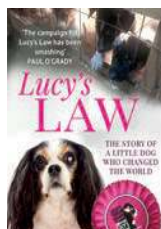
"It's been unbelievable; the biggest, most stressful chess game ever! People have no idea how hard we've had to fight for 10 years to achieve something so obvious. It's been exhausting and it's so sad that Lucy, my dad, and Philippa [Robinson] never saw the finishing line."

Q Lucy's Law comes into effect on April 6, 2020. How are you planning to celebrate?

"Although I feel incredibly proud of everything we have achieved, the celebration will be very low-key and tinged with sadness — probably a quiet meal in Westminster for the campaigning team. We will raise a glass to Lucy and all the other victims of cruel puppy and kitten farms."

Published by Mirror Books, 'Lucy's Law — the story of a little dog who changed the world', charts the sad life of Lucy, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, who was born in 2008 on a Welsh puppy farm and repeatedly bred to produce litters of puppies in atrocious conditions. When Lucy was rescued five years later, she was blind in one eye and suffering from scalds, burns, crippling arthritis, separation anxiety, malnutrition, and a fused spine. This is the true tale of one small dog who had a big role to play in bringing about the end of cruel puppy farming in the UK.

Launched at Crufts 2020, 'Lucy's Law' can be bought from all good book retailers, such as Waterstones, Amazon, and Mirror Books, priced at £8.99.



INITIATIVE TAKES OFF

Emotional support dogs have been drafted into another UK airport to help comfort anxious flyers, and passengers with hidden disabilities.

Following on from Aberdeen — the first in the country to trial airport therapy dogs — and London Southend (featured in Your Dog last month),

Southampton International Airport is the latest to employ calming canines.

Having trialled the initiative last year, the Canine Crew, five dogs and their volunteer handlers from the charity Therapy Dogs Nationwide, will now be a fixture in Arrivals and Departures once a week.

DOG DATA

Rental management expert Howsy has named Blackpool as the best and most affordable place in the UK for pet-loving tenants.

public outreach programme, explained: "Podcasts are a great addition to our website, giving animal owners a convenient and highly engaging way to learn more about the veterinary specialist's role."

Visit <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/speak-to-a-vet-specialist/id1481119149>

PICK A PET PLAYLIST

Spotify — the digital music service that gives people access to millions of songs — has launched a pet playlist.

The audio streaming site cleverly allows owners to tailor-make playlists based on their pet's personality.

Research conducted by the Spotify team found that 71 per cent of owners play music, particularly classical and soft rock, for their pets, and believe it boosts animals'

happiness, relieves stress, and keeps them company if home alone.

Head to www.spotify.com/pets to create a playlist for your dog.

BURNS BACKS CHARITIES WITH 50K DONATION

Burns Pet Nutrition has chosen to support Bedlington Terrier Rescue Foundation, and West Cork Animal Welfare this year, with £50,000 in funds and food.

The money will boost BTRF's innovative training scheme for foster carers by enabling them to work with behaviourists, while WCAW will now be able to buy much-needed items for its rescue centre.

This is the fifth year that Burns has run its Charity of the Year programme.

Business owner and vet John Burns said: "We are fortunate that we're able to support

community causes and charities. Burns should be a force for good."

NEW BALLS, PLEASE!

Golden Retriever Finley has broken the world record for holding the highest number of tennis balls in his mouth.

The six-year-old dog, who lives with his owners Cheri and Rob Molloy and their daughter Erin, in New York, USA, can squeeze six tennis balls in his mouth at once. It's hoped that Finley's talent will be made official by Guinness World Records once all the necessary paperwork is complete.

The clever retriever, who has 29,000 Instagram followers, beat the previous record set in 2003 by another Golden Retriever, Augie, from Dallas, who managed five tennis balls.



● Researchers in Stockholm, Sweden, have unearthed an 18,000-year-old frozen and perfectly preserved puppy in a remote part of north east Siberia.

Dubbed Drogo — meaning ‘wolf or dog’ — the male puppy is believed to have been about two months old when he died. He was found in permafrost (ground that’s completely frozen for two or more years) a couple of hours from the nearest town of Belaya Gora.

Experts are unsure where to place Drogo on the evolutionary scale between wolf and domesticated dog. He boasts intact milk teeth, nails, thick fur, and eyelashes.

● A bungling armed robber who attempted to steal Tarzan, a nine-week-old American Bulldog, in Brampton, Canada, accidentally shot himself in the leg as he made his getaway.

The suspect had threatened the pet owner with a gun before running off with the puppy.

Peel Regional Police arrested a 20-year-old man who was given medical attention for his injury, before being charged with robbery and firearm offences. Tarzan was returned unharmed to his owner.

NEW DOG, OLD TRICKS?

New research shows that stray dogs can respond to cues from a person, suggesting that understanding between humans and canines goes far deeper than training alone.

The study, in *Frontiers in Psychology*, found that 80 per cent of the stray dogs in the trial successfully followed pointing gestures to a specific location, despite never having received any training. Results revealed that dogs can understand gestures simply by watching humans.

To investigate whether this could have any implications for reducing conflict between stray dogs and humans, Dr Anindita Bhadra and colleagues from the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Kolkata, in West Bengal,

studied strays in several cities across India. The researchers approached solitary stray dogs and pointed to one of two covered bowls placed nearby. The more nervous dogs, who may have had a bad experience with humans in the past, did not approach either bowl, while 80 per cent of the strays that approached the bowls, followed the correct cues. These dogs were noted as less wary of people and more friendly.

“We thought it was amazing that the dogs could follow a gesture as abstract as momentary pointing,” explained Dr Bhadra. “They are quite capable of understanding our body language and we need to give them their space. A little empathy and respect for another species can reduce a lot of conflict.”



Research suggests stray dogs can understand complex gestures without training.

Finding the Pawfect Match

An interactive tool to help people avoid ‘pet regrets’ has been launched after 51 per cent of owners admitted not doing enough research before getting an animal.

According to figures by Sainsbury’s Bank Pet Insurance, 22 per cent of owners regret choosing a breed incompatible with their lifestyle. Astonishingly, 31 per cent confessed they didn’t have enough time to look after the animal, 18 per cent were allergic to the pet, 16 per cent said they didn’t like its personality, and five per cent only got a particular breed because they’d seen it in a film or with a celebrity.

So, to help future pet owners make more informed decisions when choosing a breed to suit their circumstances,

the insurer has teamed up with TV vet Dr Scott Miller to launch the Pawfect Match. This interactive tool enables would-be owners to research how much exercise their prospective dog will need, its suitability around children, and various personality traits.

“I am saddened to hear that so many owners are regretting the animals they have chosen as companions,” said Scott. “Dogs and cats come in all shapes and sizes and have different temperaments. Looking after a pet is a huge commitment so it’s important that people undertake adequate research beforehand to ensure it is a happy experience for them and the animal.”

Visit the Sainsbury’s Bank Pawfect Match tool at www.sainsburysbank.co.uk/pet-insurance/pawfect-match for top tips on dog and cat breeds and how best to care for them.



Research potential pets carefully.

A sad farewell

WE
LOVE

**NEW ON THE MARKET AND
CATCHING THE EYE OF
THE YOUR DOG TEAM...**

Cancer-stricken Cocker Spaniel Marley has melted hearts in Belfast, Northern Ireland, after his sad story attracted more than 350 supporters and 400 dogs to one of his final walks.

The seven-year-old dog has hemangiosarcoma, a very aggressive form of cancer, and his owner Ashleigh Murray knows that he has just weeks left to live, despite undergoing surgery to remove his spleen and a tumour.

Heartbroken Ashleigh, who describes Marley as her 'soul dog', is determined to make the most of their time left together by spoiling him with toys and tasty dinners.

And she wanted to make sure one of his last walks was memorable, so invited owners and their dogs from across Northern Ireland to join them at Crawfordsburn Country Park in Bangor, County Down. Hundreds saw Ashleigh's Facebook post and turned up for Marley's Big Walk, helping to raise money for Dogs Trust, while local businesses donated treats for the dogs, and pizza for the owners.

Ashleigh, whose beloved spaniel has helped her through the loss of a baby, her father's death, the breakdown of a 10-year relationship, and PTSD, was "humbled and honoured" by the number of people and dogs who attended.

- ... these pet-safe home cleaning products from Squeeky
- Cleaners. Just the job for dogs who are sensitive to the
- harsh chemicals contained in traditional cleaning products,
- this organic, vegan, and 100 per cent natural range is
- good news for pets, children, allergy sufferers, and
- the planet. Choose from
- bathroom, floor, glass, and
- multi-purpose cleaners, as
- well as limescale remover
- and polish. All products
- are completely safe,
- even if ingested, and the
- aluminium bottles are
- refillable, longer lasting,
- and easier to recycle than
- plastic containers. What's
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There's a new
way to tackle
canine obesity.

Get fit, not fat!

A healthy dog food brand is inviting owners of overweight dogs to sign them up for Britain's first online canine slimming club.

Pure Pet Foods' SlimmingDogs.co.uk is offering portly pets the chance to get healthy and shed the pounds by ditching biscuits and poor-quality kibble.

The site features a healthy eating and exercise programme offering tailor-made advice.

It's been launched in response to PDSA research, which revealed as many as 1.7 million dogs in Britain could be dangerously overweight or obese, a figure that has risen 50 per cent in just two years, and is now at an all-time high.

A SlimmingDogs spokesman said: "When you consider there could be almost two million overweight dogs in the UK, it really is shocking and time something was done to tackle the problem. It's not that dog owners don't care, it's that they lack the information needed to ensure their dogs stay on a healthy diet. By signing up for free, pet owners will join a community of like-minded animal lovers eager to share information and advice."



Tony Cruse is a dog trainer and the owner of Tc Dog Training and Galleywoofers Dog Training Club, based in Chelmsford, Essex. He is a member of The Association of Pet Dog Trainers and The Institute of Modern Dog Trainers, and the author of '101 Doggy Dilemmas' and 'Woofs of Wisdom'. Tony is celebrating his 10th year as a professional trainer and behavioural adviser.

The more, the merrier?

Or is more than one dog double the trouble? Trainer **Tony Cruse** advises for anyone thinking of extending their canine family.

Have you ever considered increasing the number of dogs in your home? Maybe you think your existing pet could do with a pal, or perhaps you're considering adding more than one?

Whatever your reasoning, you only need to flick to our Dog Answers section to realise that, despite their unconditional love, dogs can be challenging, and dealing with a group of dogs in your home can be even more demanding.

Everyone wants a happy home, but it only takes one incident to damage a canine relationship, and that expectation is ruined.

Owners often expect that a new dog, or dogs, will enter their houses, fit in with their routines, and simply co-exist with the established, comfortable dogs they already have.

Although this can happen occasionally, almost by accident, it pays to be prepared and to focus on some key points.

When more than one dog is padding around your home, doggy dynamics come into play, and those dynamics often make solving domestic issues quite complicated.

In every situation, each dog may behave differently. The dogs' individual behaviours, towards each other and towards you, may vary considerably, and these variables make the outcome unpredictable.

When I am on a behavioural consultation in a multi-dog home, the dynamics mean it takes much more time to establish an appropriate strategy than it would if I was addressing a single dog's issues.

STRATEGIES, ORGANISATION, AND MANAGEMENT

To help each dog, it is wise to consider potential flashpoints (mealtimes, preparing for a walk, playing). Prevention is better than creating and then dealing with a problem. And to prevent the dogs from aggravating one another, you can use management. Dogs are generally happy when they have space and can choose to move away and create space. If that choice is removed and it's particularly crowded, you'll often see them adopting aggressive-looking posturing (stiff body language, bared teeth) and communication (a growl). It's basic doggy language for 'back off'. If this happens repeatedly, the relationships between the dogs can go downhill rapidly.

To prevent this from happening,



Could you cope with more than one dog?



Beni and Albie.

Case study

"Two's company!"

For Joan Kettley, doubling up on her canine companions has proved a great success.

The retired area manager for social care, from Chelmsford, Essex, now has two male dogs: laid-back 12-year-old German Shepherd Albie, and mixed breed rescue dog Beni, who's about four years old.

"Beni came from Portugal," said Joan. "We were on holiday there with the family. My daughter noticed a stray dog outside the villa, lying under a tree. Eventually, he started to come over to the villa. Initially, he was very scared of people, but my daughter encouraged him to come closer with food and drink. She fell in love with him and decided to bring him home.

"After a lot of organising, he eventually came over two months later, but, unfortunately, he didn't get on with her rescue dog. I had recently retired, had some time on my hands, and we had already been talking about getting another dog, so Beni came to us.

"He was around 12 months old at the time, and it took a while for him to get used to living in a house with a family. But Albie was very patient with him, and never retaliated. After a period of settling in, I took Beni to training which helped us to bond.

"He's come a long way, has learned to be part of the family, and has turned into an affectionate dog.

"I've found the most challenging aspects of having two dogs are the muddy paws and the fur. My work is never done; I'm constantly cleaning!

"But having Beni around has given Albie a new lease of life and he loves walking and running around with him. Sadly, Albie's back legs have started to give way and long walks are no longer an option for him. Beni continues to love his walks, but has also become a good house dog. He has an excellent mentor in Albie.

"I love seeing them interact; they are my doggy family. I would certainly consider another dog if anything happened to Albie."

ensure each dog has his own space in the house to retreat to should he choose. Separate bedding areas and separate food bowls are often necessary. Feeding separately can allow each dog to enjoy his meal without worrying about losing out on the amount of food given. I often find that if dogs are fed in different areas of the house, they remain content together on a daily basis and they appear to enjoy their food more. It takes away the competition; one food bowl and two dogs can be a flashpoint!

Using door gates and barriers can be a simple solution. Place one food bowl down, shut the door gate, and address the other dog's meal. If you do this routinely, it soon becomes a successful feeding strategy. Other management tools include indoor leads, which can prevent a young dog from constantly fussing an older companion; crates, which allow secure sleeping quarters; and playpens, which can keep a puppy in a safe place while you attend to the other dogs or answer the front door. In a multi-dog home, management is vital.

BENEFITS OF HAVING MORE THAN ONE DOG

- More company for each dog.
- More company for each person.
- Walks can be more of a family experience.
- Interesting to observe the dogs' interactions.
- You can create competition to improve recall (the first dog to return gets the reward).
- A confident dog can positively affect another, helping to solve a problem.

NEGATIVES TO HAVING MORE THAN ONE DOG

- Higher vet bills/insurance.
- More poo to pick up.
- The expense of dog food.
- More time training.
- A nervous dog can negatively affect another, creating a problem.

MANAGEMENT TOOLS

- Door gates.
- Stair gates.
- Indoor leads.
- Barriers (sofas and chairs).
- Crates.
- Playpens.
- House leads (thin longer leads).
- Regular leads.



BRINGING HOME A NEW DOG

Whether you are introducing a new puppy or a rescue dog to your established dog or pack, never rush the situation, but give each dog plenty of time and space. Never hurry your new dog straight in the front door, and surprise your other pets. Putting a lead on all dogs, with one person per dog, and greeting in the street is an excellent place to start. Then, move the introduction to the garden. Keep all dogs on-lead initially to prevent jumping up and over-exuberance. Allow the dogs to back away. Intermittently feed each dog a treat to make the experience a positive one.

After a while, remove the lead from one dog, usually the calmest. This way, you can control the excited dog and the calm dog will generally make the correct choices.

Having a strange dog literally enter your home can be quite upsetting for the established dog or dogs, and many will effectively guard the threshold. I usually allow the new dog in first for a sniff

around the home before bringing in the established dog or dogs. This immediately prevents any threshold guarding.

Make use of leads indoors. The lead is a useful management tool in the early stages and prevents one dog from upsetting another.

WHICH ONE IS TOP DOG?

Many years ago, it was thought that you had to identify one of your dogs as the 'top dog'. Labels such as 'boss', 'alpha', or 'dominant dog' were used. Owners were told to feed this dog before the others, fuss him first, and allow him or her into the garden first. However, in my experience and according to research, it is far more complicated than this. Forcing an outdated concept onto dogs can cause domestic upset by placing the dogs in unnecessary, stressful situations. Dogs behave very differently in many different situations, so don't waste your time deciding which dog might be 'top dog' or building a perceived

'pack leader'. Instead, train simple manners, create pleasant encounters, and manage the dogs around their resources.

COMPETING AND ARGUING

Hopefully, most situations will not develop into dog fights. However, fighting can occur when two or more dogs are competing for a resource. Generally, the last thing a dog wants to do is get into a physical argument, and they will usually posture hundreds of times before one occurs. If you can spot these often quick, warning signs, you can interrupt the situation before the damage is done.

Firstly, always be aware of resources. These are where the flashpoints (arguments) are likely to occur. The simplest thing is to safely remove the toy, or chew, before things escalate. Then reconsider management for next time.

Secondly, observe the dog's body language. Stress and anxiety will occur before any aggressive posturing. Fighting often occurs after direct eye contact, a growl, a display of teeth, or an air snap. Never let conflicting dogs 'just get on with it'! Ideally, stop it before the physical stuff starts, by reading the signs and interrupting and distracting. In an emergency, interrupt with a loud noise, but think twice before grabbing a dog in a fight as you are likely to get bitten.

HIGH VALUE

Resources are things (objects and areas) that a dog may consider high value. They can be different for each dog. Be aware that arguments can occur around resources — take two hungry dogs and one chew, for a simple example!

Training may be more challenging.





Playtime can be more fun when there are lots of you.

RECALL AND ATTENTION EXERCISE

Recall is a vital exercise to teach any dog, and could easily be a lifesaver in an emergency situation.

When you have a group of dogs, you need to be able to call each dog individually. But often, in the park, you may also need to call all the dogs as a group.

The answer is to ensure each dog knows his or her name individually, while also maintaining a group recall.

SINGLE DOG RECALL

- Have some tasty treats discreetly on you.
- Calmly approach the first dog and get as close as you can.
- Say the dog's name in a jolly way, and immediately find his mouth with the treat; pop it in!
- Repeat with each dog.
- After repeating this over a number of days and in various locations (kitchen, garden), this time, use the dog's name and allow the individual dog to orientate towards you for the treat. Repeat with all dogs.
- Over time, increase the distance so each dog has to travel further to you to get the treat.
- If a dog has a favourite toy, you can substitute the treat for a game with the toy.
- If any other dog approaches, ignore and ensure only the dog whose name you called gets the reward.

DID YOU KNOW?

Potential resources may include food and treats, empty food bowls, doorways, entrances, and exits, owners, toys, and comfortable places (such as the sofa).

GROUP RECALL

There are times when you will have to call all the dogs back to you. Rather than calling all their names, which could take a while, you can have a collective recall command. Choose a word like 'Dogs' or 'Group'. It needs to be said in an upbeat way, almost like you are singing it!

- Start in the garden or a quiet area of the house. Sing out the collective recall command — 'Dogssss' for example.
- Have something on you that can excite the dogs and get them to come to you. Rustle the snack bag or show them a food bowl or toy.
- The order is vital — it must be the command followed by the prompt, so say 'Dogssss' and then immediately rustle the treat bag or show the food bowl or toy.
- When the dogs get to you, reward them with a treat in any order, taking care not to drop the treat. You can even have the treats in a bowl ready to distribute.
- Repeat this many times over the next week.
- Slowly and randomly stop using the prompt, which is the bag rustle or the visual lure (toy or food bowl), so you are just using the verbal command.
- You should soon find that the collective recall will be sufficient. You still need to reward each dog though.
- Practise this in the garden and carefully in the park. Add distractions/attractions slowly.

Case study



The two Golden retrievers plus Doris, the Rottweiler.

"They've taught me so much"

Dog trainer and behaviourist Jill Hyslop, from Dungarvan, County Waterford, says she didn't really plan to have multiple dogs — "the universe just kinda brought these dogs to my door."

And the owner of The Dog Lady day-care, grooming, and training, admitted she's very pleased it did. "I'm very grateful for every single one of them," she said. "They've taught me more than any course ever could."

Jill and husband Timmy, a companion animal nutritionist, now have five dogs: 13-year-old Golden Retriever Sassy, who came to Jill after her owner died; seven-year-old Oskar, another Golden Retriever and the most chilled out dog ever; two-year-old Rottweiler Doris; and Chihuahuas Daisy (6) and five-year-old 'demonic' Dennis.

Having so many dogs has its pros and cons, Jill admitted. "The pros are I can leave them at home for longer as they have each other; they get dog interaction and playtime organically; somebody always wants to do something I want to do; and when one goes I still have others that need me," she said.

The cons are: cost. "Feeding five dogs a good-quality, raw diet is expensive," said Jill. "Vet bills are times five, even buying treats or chews gets expensive. Here in Ireland, we still have dog licences, and five of them soon add up."

Time: "With five dogs with different needs there is never any time! Sassy needs short walks and brain games, the Chihuahuas need a run in a quiet place, Oskar loves to swim, and Doris still needs a lot of training and long walks — because I can't let her off-lead as she is on the restricted breed list (in Ireland)," explained Jill.

"I am very lucky in that I own a day-care so my dogs can come with me to work, but I just don't know how I would cope with meeting their needs properly if I had to leave them at home and go to work like most people."

Diluted attention: "There is no getting away from it, if I only had one dog, he or she would get five times the input and I often wonder what we could achieve then!"

TOP TIP!

For some great ideas of where to find wildflowers, visit the Woodland Trust website: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk or Forestry England: www.forestryengland.uk

Make the most of the Easter holidays and go exploring with your dog.

PUT A SPRING IN YOUR STEP!

Andrea McHugh has some fun ideas to help you and your dog make the most of the Easter break.



In among the bluebells.

Lighter nights, brighter days, and warmer temperatures make this a perfect time to get out and about with your dog. After all the months of dark evenings, and frozen fingers, you deserve it. Check out our ideas to help give you some inspiration.

FLOWER POWER

Get down to the woods and do some wildflower spotting — so good for the soul!

In April you should be able to see all kinds of varieties, including wild daffodils, early bluebells, wild garlic, cowslip, and bright yellow gorse.

Your dog will love exploring woodland trails, and sniffing all the exciting and invigorating scents. Try to find some new places to visit locally, or get in the car and travel further afield.

Out and about

After a winter of dark nights and little opportunity to venture far, make the most of being able to get out and about again in daylight hours.

Find some new walks where your dog can safely have fun on and off-lead. Arm yourself with interesting toys and special treats, so that you can brush up on recall, loose lead walking, and hide-and-seek games.

Your dog can also practise his socialisation skills by walking and playing with other friendly dogs, but always check that owners are happy for your dog to approach before allowing him to do so.

TOP TIP!

For details of a safe, enclosed space near you, visit www.dogwalkingfields.co.uk

HAVE A BLAST!

If, for some reason, the idea of an off-lead walk with your dog, in a nearby park or a local beauty spot fills you with dread, you could consider booking a slot at one of the many secure, private walking venues that are springing up all over the country.

Marianne Jackson, from Sleaford, is the owner of Milo's Meadow, a fully fenced facility in Heckington, Lincolnshire (www.heckingtonofflead.co.uk) that has toy boxes, agility equipment, hay bales, and six acres of lovely flat fields. You can also book a group session if you think your dog would enjoy running around with his friends.

"Safe off-lead fields are perfect for dogs who may be reactive, or if owners just want to enjoy letting them run around without fear of meeting other dogs who may not be very sociable," said Marianne.

"There's much more room than in the average garden, and it's safer than going to a park as you can book an entire 50-minute session to yourself.

"The dogs absolutely love it!"



Chill out at a dog-friendly cafe.

THE DOG'S BREAKFAST!

Going for an early morning walk, followed by breakfast at a dog-friendly cafe, can be the perfect start to a spring day. Many cafe owners pride themselves on offering a dog-friendly facility, where owners can enjoy a full English, and dogs can be treated to a cooked sausage as a special treat.

● To find dog-friendly pubs and cafes in your area, check out our Your Dog Membership listings starting on page 68 of this issue.



More and more eateries are welcoming dogs.

TAKE A BREAK

It's not too late to book a spring break with your dog. Whether you like the idea of a remote country cottage, a seaside retreat, or a country hotel, there is certainly something for everyone. Decide on your budget, have a look online and check on our membership listings on page 68. Make sure the accommodation you choose is dog friendly rather than just dog tolerant, with a safe and secure garden area, and close to some lovely walks.

WALK FOR CHARITY

If you like the idea of taking part in a sponsored dog walk to help raise funds for charity, check out the Great British Dog Walk in aid of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. You and your dog can take part in a fun-filled weekend dog walk taking in the scenery at some spectacular venues. There are several dates planned for April all around the country, or you can choose to do one later in the year if that is more convenient.

To find your nearest walk, visit www.hearingdogs.org.uk/support/great-british-dog-walk-2020/

Happy hiking!

If you prefer a solo hiking trip, or a stroll across the countryside with friends, there are plenty of places to explore. Nikki Collins, owner of Hotshot's Hydro in Lincoln, recently went hiking in the Lake District with a friend and four dogs, including 11-month-old Russian Toy, Imp.

"Imp had an absolute blast," said Nikki. "People would probably think a dog weighing 2.8kg was more of a stay at home type, but he loved climbing the rocks and exploring!

"I managed to buy him a really comfortable backpack from Wayfair, which only cost £17.99, and I used it when we were on roads, or when I felt he had walked far enough for his age. It was brilliant, knowing he was safe, while allowing me full control of my other dogs. Exploring with the dogs is a bit of a resolution this year — there are so many beautiful places in this country to see." ►



Imp in his comfy backpack.

Imp loved the Lakes.





Get down on the beach before it gets too busy!

SEASIDE FUN

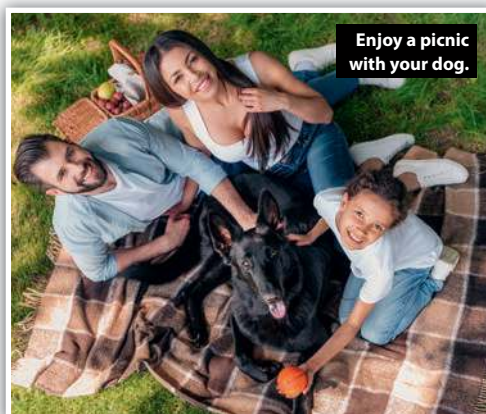
Many local authorities impose restrictions on dog owners visiting beaches between the months of May and September. This makes Easter a perfect time to fit in a fun visit to the seaside for a beach walk, a paddle, and to share an ice cream together. Remember that some areas, including promenades, may still require owners to keep dogs on a lead, so check the council's website for up-to-date information before you travel. Check tide timetables as well to ensure you and your dog remain safe at all times.

TOP TIP!

To find out more about dog-friendly beaches around the country, check out the website www.thebeachguide.co.uk/dog-friendly

PERFECT PICNIC

Everyone loves a picnic, and at this time of year the wasps are not yet out in full force, so you can enjoy a leisurely afternoon without being bothered too much by uninvited insect guests! You can plan a solo trip, or gather a group of friends together. Take a ball or a Frisbee so the dogs can let off steam before you all settle down for an al fresco feast. Don't forget to pack your camera to capture the Easter memories, and if you feel creative you could even organise an Easter egg hunt, using refillable plastic eggs and filling them with tasty dog treats; then hiding them for your dogs to find.



Enjoy a picnic with your dog.

Rest and relaxation!

You don't have to be busy every day of the Easter holidays. You might like to spend a few days just enjoying a long pamper session. Treat your dog to an appointment at your favourite grooming salon, or set time aside to bath, groom, and give him a gentle massage before settling in the garden or on the sofa for a snooze and a few well-deserved Easter treats. Don't forget that chocolate can be toxic to dogs, so keep your Easter eggs hidden safely away, and treat your special friend to some home-made dog-friendly temptations. If that seems too much effort, you can order treats online, or visit your local pet store where a wide variety will be on offer.

SHOW TIME!

Spring time is when lots of charities and organisations start to put on fundraising events. Here are some dates to consider.

Saturday, April 4

MUDDY DOG CHALLENGE

You could burn off those Easter egg calories by taking part in a Muddy Dog Challenge to raise money for the dogs and cats at Battersea. Choose from a 2.5km or 5km obstacle run, with or without a dog, doing the challenge alone, or with friends and family. Nottingham Muddy Dog Challenge on April 4 takes place in the grounds of spectacular Wollaton Hall, an Elizabethan mansion, set on top of a hill in Wollaton Park in the suburbs of Nottingham.

● For more information, visit muddydog.battersea.org.uk/muddy-dog-challenge-nottingham

Monday, April 6

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA DOGS TRUST SHREWSBURY

Enjoy an afternoon (1pm – 3pm) of fun activities creating dog-friendly Easter-themed treats. Includes a 'behind the scenes' guided tour of the rehoming centre. Booking is essential.

● For more information, contact Alison Donald, education officer; call 01952 771405 or email alison.donald@dogstrust.org.uk

Sunday, April 12

EASTER FAMILY FUN INDOOR DOG SHOW

World Horse Welfare, Hall Farm, Snetterton, Norwich, Norfolk NR16 2LP. Rosettes from first to sixth place, with classes just £2 each. Entries from 10am; judging from 11am.

● For further details, visit www.worldhorsewelfare.org

Saturday, April 18

THE BIG BARK

Enjoy a fun interactive day at Bath & West showground with plenty for dogs to do, including have-a-go agility, hoopers, temptation alley, canine Olympics, and flyball displays.

On top of all that, there will be talks by dog behaviourists, trainers, and groomers, plus popular trick training workshops.

The Big Bark will also be raising funds for local pet charities and good causes, with a fun dog show in aid of Happy Landings.

Dogs will even have their own cafe and a doggy tea party (bookable online) with party games and hats!

● For more information, visit www.bathandwestshowground.com/events

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ABOUT VICKY
Holistic vet Vicky Payne BVetMed MRCVS is based in East Sussex, and qualified from the Royal Veterinary College in 2001. She uses a range of complementary therapies alongside conventional medicine and surgery.

TOXIC treats

You need to be extra vigilant during the Easter period, especially with all those tempting foodstuffs lying around, many of which are poisonous to our dogs. **Vicky Payne** explains.

What do Halloween, Christmas, and the upcoming Easter celebrations have in common? A rise in the number of possible poisoning cases that vets have to treat!

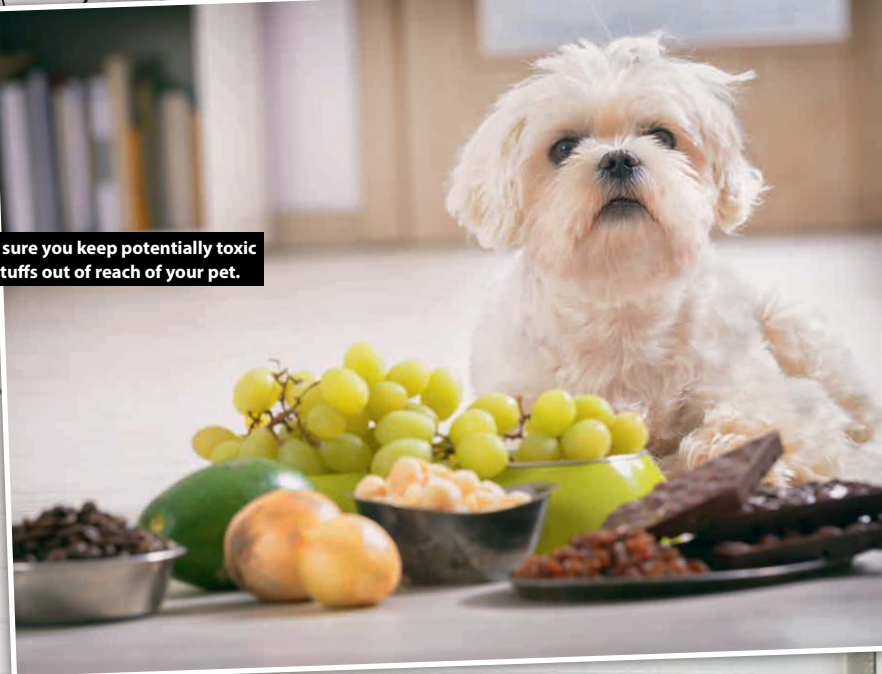
At other times of year, we tend to keep food shut away, out of the reach of greedy pups, but during these celebrations we seem more likely to leave it lying around.

So far, the run up to Easter has been fairly quiet on the chocolate front; however, an aptly named chocolate Labrador, Buttons, did give his owners a scare. While they were out for the morning, Buttons sniffed out a box of Celebrations from a kitchen cupboard, and helped himself. He was found snoozing on his bed, surrounded by the torn-up box and several wrappers. The rest of the contents were missing. Buttons' owner called us (it was a Sunday afternoon, but we are open seven days a week) in a bit of a panic. Our receptionist calmed things down, and managed to find out the size of the box. We used our handy

chocolate toxicity calculator and worked out that Buttons would not have eaten a toxic dose, as the milk chocolates (and wrappers) he'd eaten were filled. However, this dose of sugar all in one go was likely to result in an upset stomach later on, so we advised Buttons' owner to bring him in for a check over, and to pick up some probiotic paste.

Easter and Christmas also see lots of treats loaded with that other common dog poison — raisins. Grapes, sultanas, raisins, and currants cause acute kidney injury and can be fatal. Even very small amounts can be dangerous, and a hot-cross bun could certainly cause

Chocolate and raisins are both poisonous to dogs.



TIME

symptoms. Some dogs are particularly sensitive, so we always advise that we see dogs who have ingested grapes (fresh or dried) and make them vomit. If it is too late to make the dog sick, then we will monitor the kidneys with blood and urine tests and start intravenous fluids. Our Facebook page and waiting room are full of posters warning of the dangers of Easter foods, so maybe I won't have to deal with any more hot-cross bun or Easter egg vomit this year!

LIVER FAILURE

An emerging toxin for dogs is the sweetener xylitol. This is most commonly found in sugar-free chewing gums and diet products, but it can also be used in medicines, peanut butter, and cake frosting. Xylitol causes dogs' blood sugar to drop dangerously low, which can result in collapse, fitting, and death. Large doses may also cause liver failure up to a week after ingestion.

It has been a couple of years since I last saw a dog who had eaten xylitol, and I won't ever forget the children in the family crying inconsolably, as I warned their parents how dangerous chewing gum could be. Thankfully, the gum-stealing Vizsla hadn't had a big dose, and after regular blood tests showed no drop in blood glucose or changes in his liver, he got the all-clear.

From my office window, I can see some very nice yellow daffodils, but, you've guessed it, these can be toxic to dogs too. Bulbs, including daffodil, lily, and crocus, can cause nasty stomach upsets. Keep a close eye on your dog while planting these out in the garden as I have treated several dogs who followed their owners around, digging up the bulbs, and snacking on them! Other poisonous houseplants include begonias, ivy, elephant ears (*caladium*), and dumb cane (*dieffenbachia*), so check the label and plant websites if you are planning to give a houseplant as a gift to a pet-owning friend this Easter.

Foods aren't the only danger to dogs

April 2020



Lovely daffodils — but they're also poisonous to your dog.

around Easter. We have several patients recovering from surgery to remove foreign objects — including children's toys and batteries — from their intestines. With extra visitors in the house during celebrations, it can be hard to ensure everything is put out of reach, especially if your guests aren't familiar with dogs. Hearing aids seem particularly attractive!

BEWARE THE SHARE!

Finally, a warning about sharing your special Easter meal with your dog. Onions and garlic can both cause changes to the red blood cells. Usually it takes quite a large dose to cause problems, but cases have been seen in dogs fed human foods containing small amounts of onion or garlic over a long period of time.

Make sure you know who to call in case of emergency if your practice is closed over the Easter weekend. And take any remaining packaging with you, so your vet can more accurately calculate whether your dog has ingested a toxic dose.



The bulbs are the most toxic.

WATCH AND Learn

Training is the key to getting your dog more focused on you. Carol Price explains how.



Teaching your dog to watch you is invaluable.



ABOUT CAROL

Carol Price is a leading canine behaviourist, trainer, and writer, and a world-recognised specialist in the Border Collie breed. She is an official ambassador for The Border Collie Trust GB, the largest collie welfare/rehoming organisation in the UK.

Last month, I outlined how high levels of owner focus were the key to all learning in dogs, and their ability to respond reliably to anything we want them to do.

I also explained how attention and cooperation on demand were responses we had to earn from our dogs, from puppyhood onwards, through the right kind of training.

I believe higher owner focus and cooperation skills, along with better impulse control in general, are among the most valuable early life lessons you can teach any dog.

So, this month we're going to highlight some key exercises you can do with your own dog to make his focus and attention levels on you even higher.

Like all training, it is always best started as early as possible, but can still make a real difference in dogs of any age.

Start by getting your dog to look at you and try to hold his attention, rewarding with a treat or toy, whichever he prefers.



STEP 1: WATCH ME

The very first thing I do in training with any dog or puppy is see how long I can hold his attention. I show him a tasty treat in my hand, then move this hand to my face with my index finger pointing up between my eyes (see image). This way, when the dog looks up to the hand holding the treat, he is already watching me and making eye contact, at which point I will say 'Watch me', then reward him with the treat for doing so. I then see how long I can keep him watching me in this way before his attention breaks off again, and he looks or runs off elsewhere.

I do not touch the dog, or say anything else to the dog during this exercise, or say anything when he chooses to break his attention from me. Nor does it matter what position he is in initially when I ask him to watch me, although most dogs will naturally sit in expectation of a treat. All that matters is that he has chosen the option to watch me by himself, and discovered how rewarding this can be.

From this point — and still without doing or saying anything else as the

Place a treat in your hand.



Show your dog the treat.



dog watches me — I will try to stretch out the amount of time during which I can hold his attention in this way before I give him his reward.

Always begin this training in a place where there are the least amount of surrounding distractions (at home for instance). Some dogs have naturally

Close your hand and bring it up to your face with your forefinger between your eyes, as you say 'Watch me!'



longer attention spans when you start this exercise, other dogs will have incredibly short ones. But, in the latter case, this is often a behaviour that develops, or gets learned, from past experience. So, if you have a dog with a short attention span, see 'Why won't my dog concentrate on me?' (page 25).

STEP 2: WATCH ME AND WAIT IN DIFFERENT POSITIONS

After you have got your dog watching you reliably, the next step is to get him to watch you when he is in different positions — sitting, standing, lying down — and also ask him to wait. Your dog must have already been taught to sit, lie down, and wait on command.

Once your dog is in your chosen position, walk a complete circle around him while you continue to ask him to 'Watch me' and 'Wait'. Reward him really well with a treat for doing so. If your dog ever stops watching you or moves again, just keep gently repeating the exercise until he gets it right.

If your dog is more toy than food orientated in training, you can use his favourite toys as rewards instead in focus and cooperation exercises.

"Like all training, it is always best started as early as possible, but can still make a real difference at any age." ►



Practise the watch me with your dog in different positions.



Teach your dog to watch and wait before anything exciting happens.

STEP 3: WATCH ME AND WAIT BEFORE ANYTHING GOOD HAPPENS

Once you have mastered basic watch me and wait training with your dog, the next step is to ensure you ask your dog to watch you and wait for at least five to 10 seconds before anything good or exciting happens in his life — before he has a meal, or treat, or toy, or before you go out for a walk, or just before you let him out of the car when you get to a walk, or just before you let him off the lead when you arrive at a walk. This way your dog will increasingly associate watching you and waiting as the gateway behaviours to all the best things that happen in his life.

This kind of training also really helps dogs develop better impulse control.



Watching and waiting before exiting the car.



Watching and waiting before starting a walk.

STEP 4: UPPING THE LEVELS OF SURROUNDING DISTRACTION



Teach your dog to focus on you through many surrounding distractions.

Once your watch me and wait exercises are going well at home, try doing them in all sorts of different places when you are out, gradually upping the level of surrounding distraction your dog has to screen out (for instance other people, dogs, noise, traffic), while still focusing on you and cooperating with you through waiting.



Remember to reward well.

STEP 5: CHECKING BACK AND WATCHING WHEN YOU ARE OUT

Many owners may find their dogs' attention on them rapidly declines once they are out on a walk, and there are countless other distractions competing for their attention. For this reason, as well as constantly working on step 4 (training through distractions), always get into the habit — preferably from as early an age as possible — of doing the following.

Each and every time your dog runs back to you on a walk, of his own accord, praise and reward him with a really tasty treat. Not only that, but every time your dog even looks at you, or looks back at you, on a walk do the same, until this continual checking back on you during a walk becomes a more ingrained habit in him. At this stage, you will only need to reward him randomly for focusing back on you, or just for super-fast responses whenever you need to call him to you.

Initially, it is always preferable to wait until your dog chooses to look at you, or runs back to you on a walk, before rewarding him, to ensure stronger and more reliable future responses of this kind. Training like this also forms a crucial foundation to better recall training, as it is always easier to get back a dog who is frequently watching you, and finds returning to you a consistently rewarding behaviour.



Reward your dog well when he checks back with you or just looks at you on walks.

THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPULSE CONTROL IN DOGS

Along with poor owner focus, one of the commonest problems I see in modern dogs is poor impulse control — or the dog's inability to stop emotions like anxiety, excitement, or frustration exploding outwards into more excitable, reckless, or dangerous physical reactions like aggression.

Sometimes there can be deeper genetic or environmental components driving this hotter-headed behaviour in dogs. But poorer focus and impulse control are also both classic products of a mind that has never been sufficiently trained or conditioned to work in a more disciplined way, through the kind of training outlined in this feature.

Owners can also make this problem even worse in their dogs by constantly shouting at them or otherwise chastising them for their more reactive behaviour, which just further accelerates their levels of emotional arousal. Understand that being a calmer and quieter owner is the essential pre-requisite to training your dog to be calmer and more focused too.



Teaching dogs to find eye contact rewarding can also make them far more at ease with a camera.

WHY WON'T MY DOG CONCENTRATE ON ME?

If you are having difficulty getting your dog to watch you for any length of time, here are some possible reasons:

- Initially, your dog finds direct eye contact with you more worrying or threatening. The solution: place your hand with the treat and finger pointing up (see page 23) on your chest initially, rather than between your eyes, so he can watch the hand here instead. Then, only gradually, over time, once he is better used to this, lift your hand higher up to your face.
- You have rewarded your dog more immediately in the past for, say, sitting and watching you for only an instant, which means his attention span has become only an instant too. You need to steadily lengthen the amount of time your dog has to watch you before being rewarded, in order to lengthen his attention span.
- You are expecting your dog to focus for longer on you before he has learned to concentrate through surrounding distractions (see step 4).

Britain's most dog-friendly
towns & cities

DOGGY Heaven

New
series



The market town of Keswick has won the coveted Most Dog Friendly Town title in the 2019 Dog Friendly Awards. **Elizabeth Perry** reports.

The pretty market town of Keswick lies nestled at the foot of the mighty mountain of Skiddaw, with the shores of Derwentwater a stone's throw away.

A popular tourist spot in the Lake District, there is no doubt that dogs are warmly welcomed by the people of Keswick, including almost all the shops, pubs, restaurants, and hotels, as well being allowed on buses and the boats that offer trips across the lake. Dogs can even go into the local borough office. There are bowls of water placed outside many of the shops, while treats are often available on shop counters. So, what is Keswick's secret?

Image: Keswick Tourism Association.



The boat landings on Derwentwater.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Keswick is a magnet for walkers of every ability, and this differentiates it from Ambleside and Windermere in the south of the Lake District.

Chris Harper, who runs the local pet shop, Podgy Paws, with her husband, Peter, and their dog, Buddy, explained: "Keswick is as popular as Windermere, but we get a different type of tourist here — I call them the fleece brigade. They are mainly walkers because we are very well placed for some of the big fells,

including Helvellyn and Scafell Pike."

Many of these visitors bring their dogs with them and Chris sees the numbers increasing every year. "It was after the town won its first Dog Friendly Award that we noticed dog visitors increasing. It had a domino effect," she said.

David Burn, the Mayor of Keswick, who moved to the town in 2008 after falling in love with the area, concurred. "Keswick won its first Dog Friendly title in 2012 and we got our name out there as a dog-friendly town," he recalled. "That encourages people who don't know the area but who want to take their dog on holiday to visit us, because they know they will get a good welcome."

David also believes that consistently winning the award became a badge of honour, encouraging local businesses to up their game. "Once you've been given a title, you want to hang on to it, and traders look at what they can do better."

EVERYONE WELCOME

It seems that once a dog lover visits Keswick, the town acts like a magnet, drawing people back time after time. "We see the same faces three or four times a year," Chris revealed. "A lot of people say they come to Keswick because it is so dog friendly as opposed to

dog tolerant, which is a very different thing."

The pet shop is the hub of the dog-loving community, not just for pet products, but also for advice and information about all things canine in the area.

Chris, who retired from the police force two years ago, is passionate about promoting Keswick as a dog-friendly destination. She is also a tireless fundraiser for charity, selling poppies for dogs and inviting them to visit Santa Paws at the shop. She also produces Keswick's Dog Friendly Guide sold in the shop with the proceeds going to charity.

One thing that everyone emphasises is how much dog owners appreciate the facilities available to them, and that, despite the odd complaint, most dog owners are considerate, cleaning up after their pets.



Chris, Peter, and Buddy.



Mayor David Burn says the Dog Friendly Award has become a badge of honour.

KESWICK OFFERS

● **Keswick Launch.**

Offer: 10% off boat trips.

● **Podgy Paws.** Offer: 10% off any dog coat or harness.

To find out more visit www.yourdog.co.uk/card

The Lakeland town of Keswick, with Derwentwater behind.

A WARM WELCOME FOR DOGS

Sally's Cottages is an award-winning company based in Keswick with over 500 self-catering properties in the Lake District and Cumbria. More than 50 per cent of these are dog friendly and over a third of people using Sally's Cottages take a dog on holiday. A quarter of these have one dog, 10 per cent two, while two per cent have three or more dogs.

"The cottages vary in what they offer," said Kim Brough, PR and marketing coordinator. "They may include doggy welcome packs, dedicated doggy rooms, and private enclosed paddocks for the pups to run free."

Kim knows why so many people take their dogs to Keswick. "Keswick is such a pet-friendly town," she enthused. "You can go in almost all the shops and pubs with dogs and there are lots of other



A canine guest at one of the holiday cottages.

dog owners around for a chat and a sniff.

"The scenery around Keswick is also fantastic for dogs. What dog wouldn't want to have a good splash in Derwentwater or run about on the fells — responsibly, of course, when there are no sheep around."

Many of the staff at Sally's Cottages own dogs, and company owner, Sally Fielding, tells the tale of her old dog, Ted.

"They say that Border Collies are intelligent and Ted certainly was," she reminisced. "He'd sit on the garden wall all day and look really miserable. I'd sit there in the office watching him and everyone who passed would give him a little treat. And they all thought that they were the only person to look after him, and would harangue me about 'that poor dog'. In fact, he was the most pampered pooch in the whole of Bassenthwaite village. Sadly, he passed away last Christmas."

Ted worked hard to get the sympathy of passers-by!

AND RELAX...

One business that caters for canine customers is The Chalet Tearooms and Restaurant, which is run by Angela Clarke with help from her chocolate Labrador, Charley. "She is 11 years old and has always been part of team Chalet," said Angela.



Angela and Charley.

Dogs are more than welcome inside the eatery in the village of Portinscale, perched on the shores of Derwentwater, and just a mile down the road from Keswick. The tearooms were redesigned to provide a welcoming atmosphere for weary walkers to rest, and the tables are widely spaced so dogs can stretch out on the warm floor.

"The Chalet is dog friendly inside and out. We provide dog towels and treats, and we have underfloor heating to keep them toasty," said Angela. She knows why the town is so popular with dog lovers. "We have the loveliest walks and lots of great lakes and rivers for those dogs who love a swim," she said.

Britain's most dog-friendly towns & cities

FUN FOR EVERYONE

Everyone in the town loves the annual Scruffs Dog Show, now in its seventh year. Held at the end of June as part of the Keswick Mid-Summer Festival, it attracts over 500 entrants with hundreds more attending to watch the fun.

So popular is the event, which is partly sponsored by Podgy Paws, that each class — including such categories as Most Appealing Eyebrows and Waggiest Tail — is sponsored by not one, but two local businesses.

"We get two individual businesses to donate a prize worth about £50 because there are so many businesses that want to sponsor a class," said Chris Harper enthusiastically. "The business owners come to judge their own classes because they look forward to the show as much as anyone else."

"It's not too big and we want to keep it that way, so it still retains its fun element."

One of the most sought-after prizes is the Wooden Bone Award, given to a dog who stands out for the wrong reasons.

"One time, in the Best Biscuit Catcher category, a dog ran out of the crowd and sat in front of the judges, waiting for a biscuit to be thrown at him — and he wasn't even in the class, so he won the Wooden Bone Award," said Chris. "The crowd couldn't stop laughing it was so funny."



Last year's Best Biscuit Catcher, Lexi, with owner Matt Le Voi.

Image: Keswick Tourism Association.



ACCESS ALL AREAS

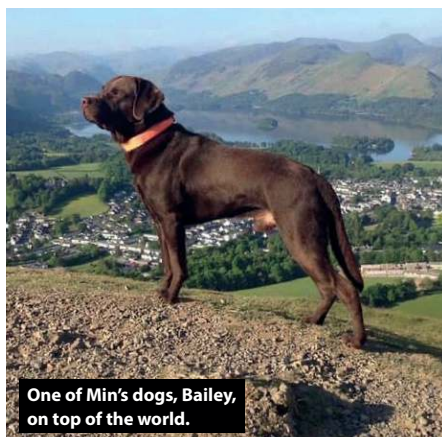
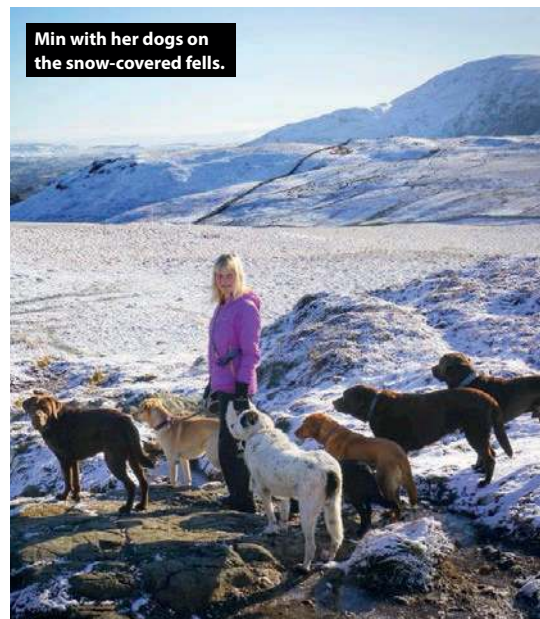
One resident who was unable to resist the call of Keswick is Min Grant who first started holidaying in the town in the late eighties, and moved up from Kent permanently in 2008.

Min, a retired police officer, started rescuing dogs after she was widowed for the second time, and now has eight dogs, mainly Labradors with one or two Labrador-crosses thrown in, ranging in age from Hoffmeister, who is 11, to Glayva, who is three. Min takes on the oldies and shut-down cases no one else wants, and offers them the perfect home for their last few years.

Having so many dogs means Min is very aware of how dog friendly the town is. "Keswick is doggy heaven," she stated emphatically. "The dogs are allowed everywhere."

"I live at the bottom of Latrigg Fell and I am

Min with her dogs on the snow-covered fells.



One of Min's dogs, Bailey, on top of the world.

up there every day with the gang — come rain or shine! I love to walk around Lake Derwentwater too. The Chalet and Lingholm Kitchen are on my route; both are super dog friendly and do amazing food! On a hot day I call in to The Mary Mount Hotel, which is also dog friendly, for a cold cider.

"Other places I love to walk around are Buttermere and Ennerdale Water. I'm so lucky to live here — it's amazing."

"Local businesses think that if you go to the trouble of bringing your four-legged friend, then you want to spend time with them, having a coffee or lunch together."

WELL-DESERVED AWARD

Keswick offers something for dogs young and old, with gentle walks around the lake path, and hills galore to climb; lakes and rivers for refreshing swims, and cosy coffee shops in which to relax. Plus, with a water bowl at every corner, the town's dog-friendly title is clearly well deserved!

Keswick Market Square and Moot Hall.



LOVING KESWICK!

Our Facebook fans share their thoughts on Keswick:

"Keswick Launch operates dog-friendly boat trips on Derwentwater — highly recommended. You can get off at various stops for a walk, and then enjoy refreshments at the dog-friendly Cafe Hope, which is a short walk from the lake in Keswick."

Kelly Jackson.

"We love Keswick! We visit every year and stay in a lovely dog-friendly cottage. The local people and holidaymakers are very friendly. There are tons of dog-friendly places to visit, as well as dog-friendly pubs, where even the doggy visitors have a choice from their own menu!"

Pawfect Scents.

"Where do I start? I have been going to Keswick twice a year for the past 12 years with my Labrador Retriever, Murphy. There are very few places that aren't dog friendly. Wherever we go, I am always made to feel welcome and Murphy loves going on the launch, although he isn't a fan of the buses. There are plenty of good walks and places to eat that are dog friendly. A visit to Podgy Paws pet shop is a must."

Helen Churchill.

"Keswick is so-o-o dog friendly. We went three times last year and stayed at the dog-friendly Keswick Reach Lodge Retreat. Tons of walks in the area — our favourite being the Langstrath Valley in the Borrowdale area. Also worth a mention is the Lingholm Kitchen in Portinscale, a lovely dog-friendly cafe."

Sarah Ward.

KESWICK'S CANINE AMBASSADOR

One local dog, English Springer Spaniel Max, was awarded the title Canine Ambassador to Keswick by The Keswick Tourism Association. His owner, Kerry Irving, explains why Max was chosen for the role.

"We were awarded that accolade because we bring so many people into the town. I arrange walks to raise money for charity. It's all done through social media and people come from all over the world. In August we held a big charity walk to raise money for the PDSA, and 250 people bought tickets to be a part of it.

"As well as Max, who is now 12, I have Paddy and Harry, also Springer Spaniels. We've raised £134,000 for various charities including the PDSA, animal rescue centres, mountain rescue, service

dogs, and the charity Mountains for the Mind, a mental health awareness charity."

Kerry's fund-raising efforts have been recognised by royalty. He and Max were invited to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace, and when the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visited Keswick a few weeks later, they specifically requested to meet all three dogs.

Kerry, who is the town's locksmith, isn't just a local celebrity but, thanks to his social media profile detailing life with his three dogs, is famous worldwide. His story has just been published in a book detailing how Max helped him to recover, both physically and mentally, from a terrible accident.

Kerry also gives talks in both schools and businesses about how dogs can help mental health awareness.

Kerry with Max, Paddy, and Harry.



Max meets the Duchess of Cambridge.



Image: The Times and Star.

USEFUL CONTACTS

- Keswick Tourism Association; www.visitkeswick.com
- Podgy Paws; www.podgypaws.co.uk
- The Chalet Tearooms; www.thechaletportinscale.co.uk
- Sally's Cottages; www.sallyscottages.co.uk
- Max in the Lakes; www.facebook.com/maxinthelakes/



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Good luck!

For full competition terms and conditions, visit
www.warnersgroup.co.uk/competition-terms/

As an Easter treat, we've got a double dose of giveaways for you this month — even more chances to win!

HAMPERS OF DOG GEAR

TRIXIE is giving away a BE NORDIC hamper to three lucky readers. Each hamper contains a BE NORDIC ceramic bowl, an Ocke octopus plush toy, a playing rope with woven-in ball, a Fohr bed, and a rope lead.

The BE NORDIC range features products on a maritime theme in robust fabrics and colours, including collars, leads, places to lie, cuddly caves, bowls, and toys.

● For more information, visit www.trixie.de or call 020 7154 2940.



**3
TO GIVE
AWAY**

BAGS OF DOG FOOD

VetSpec Healthy Dog Adult Formula is a cereal grain-free, super-premium dog food for all dogs. It includes 60 per cent chicken with added vegetables and herbs, and a veterinary-specification supplement that will have your canine friend looking and feeling in great shape.

The supplement includes biotin and other associated nutrients to improve the coat and promote a supple skin, while the prebiotic fibre and herbal sources help maintain gut health in dogs with sensitive stomachs. We have a 12kg bag to give away to six lucky winners.

● For more information, visit www.vetspec.com or call 01845 565630.



**6
TO GIVE
AWAY**



CROSS-STITCH KITS

World leader in counted cross-stitch design, Heritage Crafts is offering 10 lucky Your Dog readers the chance to win 'Dog Show', a cross-stitch kit from the Karen Carter Collection.

Each kit contains Zweigart fabric, DMC stranded cottons sorted on to numbered cards, a needle, and clear charts and instructions.

Heritage Crafts works with talented artists, including Karen Carter, John Clayton, Peter Underhill, Valerie Pfeiffer, and Villager Jim, to produce cross-stitch designs that cater for everyone, from beginners to expert stitchers.

● For more information, visit www.hcrafts.com or call 01889 575256.

**10
TO GIVE
AWAY**

**36
TO GIVE
AWAY**

DENTAL SPRAYS

VetIQ 2in1 Gum Shield Spray is designed to help reduce oral bacteria, maintain gum health, and help prevent the formation of plaque. With its unique blend of pomegranate extract, peppermint, and parsley seed oil, it freshens your pet's breath while promoting a healthy mouth.

The spray also contains a special form of vitamin C that promotes normal collagen formation in the gums, and helps to reduce plaque.

We have a bottle of 2in1 Gum Shield Spray to give away to 36 lucky winners.

● For more information, visit www.markandchappell.com





BAGS OF DOG FOOD

Arden Grange Light with fresh chicken & rice contains just 7.5 per cent fat and is lower in protein and oil compared to the company's other adult diets. With fewer calories, it can aid in weight reduction and the treatment of obesity, while the addition of L-carnitine may help to increase the conversion of fat to energy, and helps maintain lean body

mass. The inclusion of yucca extract with its antioxidant properties can combat the effects of free radicals, from which obese animals are more at risk. We have five 12kg bags to give away to readers.

● For more information, visit www.ardengrange.com or call 01273 833390.

**5
TO GIVE
AWAY**

FREEZE-DRIED DOG FOOD

Experts in natural pet food, True Instinct is giving readers the chance to win a selection of products from its new grain-free freeze-dried range for dogs. Available in varieties such as beef, chicken, lamb, turkey, salmon, beef liver, and beef tripe, the tasty products are all freeze-dried using state-of-the-art techniques to lock in the goodness and intense taste. The range is not only extremely nutritional, but also minimally processed, and convenient to store and serve. The prize includes one bag of Meat Bites, perfect for treats and snacks, one bag of Complete Dinners, and one bag of Real Chunks, which can be served as a meal component.

● For further information, visit www.trueinstinct.co.uk or call 0800 0183770.

**10
TO GIVE
AWAY**



DOG BEDS

The Scruffs Expedition Box Bed is the ideal solution for dogs who enjoy outdoor pursuits, such as beach walking and muddy forest trails. A heavy-duty, 600-denier fabric provides a robust, durable outer cover, while the reverse side of the fabric is coated with a 100 per cent water-resistant backing to keep water out. The same backing is applied to the bed's non-slip base. We have four XL box beds to give away.

● For more information, visit www.petslovescruffs.com or call 0161 702 5060.



**4
TO GIVE
AWAY**

**7
TO GIVE
AWAY**

TREAT HAMPERS

We have seven hampers of award-winning Pet Munchies gourmet treats to give away. Each hamper contains

one packet of the following: NEW Wild Salmon Strips, Buffalo Dental Chew (55g), Chicken and Cheese, Chicken & Sweet Potato, Beef Liver Crunch, Chicken Chips, Duck & Sweet Potato, Wild Salmon & Sweet Potato, Venison Strips, and Ocean White

Fish, plus three packets of training treats (50g), used and recommended by world champions.

● For more information, visit www.pet-munchies.com or email info@pet-munchies.com



HAMPERS OF GOODIES

We've teamed up with leading pet food brand Webbox to offer five lucky readers a hamper full of goodies for their dog.

Containing a selection of four fun and exciting toys, a variety of delicious treats, a Webbox bandanna, a Webbox poo bag dispenser and poo bags, and a Webbox treat tin, your dog will be delighted with this bundle of goodies.

● For more information, visit www.webbox.co.uk or call 01254 54545.

**5
TO GIVE
AWAY**



TUBS OF HERBAL SUPPLEMENT

Ever wondered what to add to your dog's diet to ensure he is getting all the minerals and vitamins he needs? We have 18 250g tubs of Keeper's Mix to give away to readers, from herbal experts Dorwest Herbs. A unique formulation, Keeper's Mix contains eight ingredients for all-round herbal health and will keep your dog in tip-top condition. Perfect for any diet, it promotes a thick, healthy coat, and maintains the body's natural balance.

● For more information, visit www.dorwest.com or call 01308 897272.



**18
TO GIVE
AWAY**

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Our Defaqto 5 Star Rating applies to Lifetime Gold Dog Insurance policies.



GET IN TOUCH...

Email your letters to
sarah.wright@warnersgroup.co.uk
Alternatively, write to: Sarah Wright, Letters,
Your Dog Magazine, Warners Group Publications,
The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire
PE10 9PH. Please include your full name, home
address, and daytime telephone number with
your correspondence otherwise, regretfully, any
prizes cannot be forwarded. The editor reserves
the right to abridge and edit letters submitted.
You can also pass your comments and views to
Sarah through Twitter (@yourdog) or Facebook
(www.facebook.com/yourdogmagazine).



LETTERS

I don't want a robot!

I wanted to say how much I enjoyed Jackie Drakeford's article 'Common sense training' (January issue). I found myself nodding vigorously with each point. I have had quite a few rescue dogs and recently adopted a five-year-old Cocker Spaniel. She's a fantastic little girl. However, she did need help with self-control when we got her, as she was a bit bonkers.

She doesn't do 'close' heel; she does sit down if asked, but if she prefers to stand, why not let her stand? I have taught her not to jump up on people, especially with muddy paws, and, most importantly for me (to keep her safe), her recall is now fantastic. However,

she would never win an obedience trial, with all its strictness.

I don't make her sit and wait endlessly for her meal, and she doesn't have to walk on a specific side when she's on-lead.

A pet hate of mine is when an owner piles endless biscuits on their dog's nose and expects the poor thing to sit there for an age before he is allowed to eat it. As Jackie mentioned, it's just teasing the poor dog. How would the owner like that?

My girl is a companion, a friend, and the best company. I don't want a robot for a dog, just a dog who likes to be with me, and who is reasonably calm and sociable, which she is now. I don't want

Dogs don't have to be robotically trained to make good companions.



to 'train' her personality out of her — what's the point in that? I realise some working dogs need specific training, as was mentioned in the article, but companion dogs? No. Thanks for such a balanced and well written article.

*Louise McGillvray,
via email.*

BRIEFLY...

Just wanted to say a very big thank you for the Tuffies dog bed I won in your Christmas competition, which couldn't have come at a better time! I was attending a hospital appointment and had just been told by my consultant that he was admitting me in less than two days' time due to complications with my knee replacement, when the email came through advising me of my win. It was just the tonic I needed, while getting my head around being admitted to hospital just one week before Christmas!

I've included a photo of our Labrador, Sunny, testing out his new bed. Once again, many thanks to all of the team at Your Dog Magazine (which is a great magazine by the way).

Wendy Stewart, via email.

It's sweet dreams for Sunny.



REHOMING FRUSTRATION

Can any Your Dog readers tell us if they have successfully rehomed a dog from a rescue centre in the last couple of years?

We both grew up with dogs, have owned two rescue dogs, and we have had our current Border Collie for four years, since he was a puppy. Your magazine even featured photos of one of our Border Collies (sadly no longer with us) because a photographer met him out on the Cotswold Way with us a few years ago.

Every rescue organisation that we've

contacted or visited has put so many obstacles in our way and been so ridiculously demanding that we've about given up, and are considering buying another puppy, which we really didn't want to do as there are so many dogs needing good homes.

G. and S. Stevenson, via email.

Editor's note: Well, it's over to you. Contact us and let us know about your rehoming experiences and we'll pass them on, along with any other advice you might have for the Stevensons.



Sometimes an older dog is just what you're looking for.

UPLIFTING READING

I was heartened to read two features in the January issue encouraging would-be dog owners to be more open-minded about the type of dog they take on.

First, there was the news that Battersea has removed the breed filter from its rehoming gallery. I know a lovely couple that are currently looking to rehome a dog, but are restricting their search to the same breed of dog that they've always had, with the result that their search has lasted months.

It's heartbreaking to think that the perfect dog may be out there somewhere in a rescue centre but is being overlooked, solely on the basis of breed. I'd imagine that this happens all too frequently, when it's highly likely that, for most people, there will be other types of dog who would tick all the boxes in terms of the practical aspects, such as size, grooming, exercise requirements, any other pets, and so on.

Secondly, the article on the advantages of the over 55-age group adopting an older dog was equally uplifting. Certainly, owning a puppy is hard work and may not be the best option for everyone, although it can be hard to admit that we no longer have the energy to keep up with a puppy! So it was great to see older dogs, who have so much to offer, being showcased in such

a positive light. I also have to say that the featured dog, Poppy the Beagle, is simply gorgeous!

I think that, as dog lovers, we can probably all take something away from these articles in terms of being more flexible in how we think about breed and age in dogs, and that can only be a good thing.

Sarah Warburton, Cheshire.

ALFIE — MY ROCK

I am not online and not very good on new mobile phones, but I wanted so much to tell you about Alfie — you see, he has saved my life.

My husband, David, and I got Alfie in September 2018; he was rescued, and in November 2018, Alfie and I found my husband in the lounge. He had suffered a heart attack. I went into total shock. From that day, Alfie and I have had a special bond. I don't drive and our world is very small now, but we live in a lovely village with lots of walks.

Alfie is my rock. I can honestly say that I would not have been here without him. I wouldn't have wanted to be, as David and I had been married for 35 years. I worship my Alfie — he is one special boy.

Sandra Smith, Worcestershire.



Alfie is a special boy.

BRIEFLY...

Where I live there is a big problem with broken glass bottles. A few years ago, my dog cut herself on glass from one such bottle. It was on one of her pads on the left back leg. It could have been worse, but as it was, it took three weeks to heal up.

Since then I have made it a practice to pick up and bin any glass bottles I find, or take them home. Last year I picked up over 300 bottles. I found lots of them in the local park or on nearby streets. If only all dog owners did the same, our parks and streets would be safer for dogs and people alike.

Dianne Goode, via email.

NON-SLIP FLOORING

I read Vicky Payne's article on arthritis (*February issue*) with interest, especially where she mentioned that a client told her about non-slip flooring. I've been wondering about replacing my slippy, strip flooring for some time and would be grateful for any recommendations from Vicky or other readers.

Several years ago, just before I moved into my current house, I bought a paint-on coating that was supposed to be brilliant at providing a non-slip floor surface, and was used widely in canteens and hospitals. Within months, my Jack Russell, on his regular routes around the house, had worn off the rough surface, so I won't be trying that again!

Many thanks for an interesting and helpful magazine.

Jean Bacon, Gloucestershire.

Ed's note: Any advice? Let us know your recommendations and we'll pass them on.

SCRAGGS by Richard Duszczak



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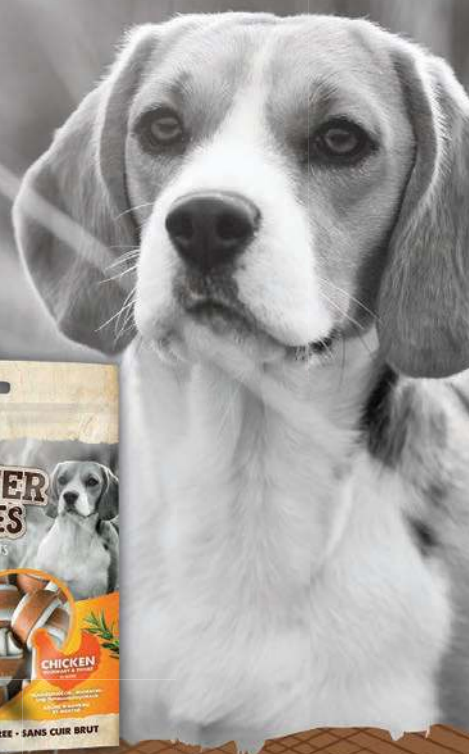
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Champion of the **UNDERDOG**

Actor **Rosie Marcel** tells **Joanne Bednall** about her four rescue dogs, her mission to help two under-the-radar canine charities, and the heartbreaking trip to Romania she'll never forget.

There's no denying that dogs play a huge role in the life of actor Rosie Marcel. In fact, by her own admission, she prefers canine to human company.

The 'Holby City' star had an assortment of animals as a child — from gerbils to cats — but didn't own a dog until she was 25, when beautiful Husky Ainu carved a special place in her heart.

Nowadays, Rosie feels more comfortable at home in Hertfordshire with husband Ben, young daughter Beau, and her four dogs than she does playing heart surgeon Jac Naylor in the BBC hospital drama, or at a glitzy showbiz awards ceremony.

But she confesses that coping with her dogs' various health needs has been particularly challenging and emotionally draining over the last couple of years.

Basset Hound Eric 'Clacton', who Rosie rehomed from a warring couple in the Essex seaside resort, is now nine and nearly blind.

"I saw him advertised on Facebook as his owners

were breaking up," recalled Rosie. "In fact, the couple were having a barney when I arrived at their Clacton-on-Sea home, and poor Eric was a confused puppy.

"Although he's starting to slow up now, he's still lively and is desperately clever."

Eric's joie de vivre is certainly due in no small part to Rosie, who's nursed him through two incidences of herniated (or slipped) discs, a problem not uncommon in the breed due to their long bodies and short legs.

REST AND REHABILITATION

"He had an operation two years ago that cost £5,000 and was followed by six months of rehabilitation," explained Rosie. "Recently, Eric has undergone rest and rehabilitation after his second slipped disc; he's a giant pain in the bottom!"

Meanwhile, six-year-old Henry, Rosie's other Basset Hound, has suffered from a totally different complaint altogether.

"Henry was the runt of the litter — a broken puppy, with a broken tail. He's had a facelift because he was prone to infections in the folds of skin along his jaw."

And just when Rosie was thinking her dogs had experienced more than their fair share of bad luck, her nine-year-old Rhodesian Ridgeback, Cohiba, who she rehomed from a woman with terminal cancer, was diagnosed with lymphoma and

a related heart condition, and has had his spleen removed.

"Cohiba has been under Fitzpatrick Referrals' oncology team since the summer and has ultrasounds every two months to monitor his progress," continued Rosie.

"My dogs are on so much medication, it's like a pharmacy here in the mornings!

"I won't lie; it's been a tough year and I don't think I've managed well. I've found it difficult, expensive, and exhausting, but it's the choice you make when you have dogs.

"All you can do is treat them the best you can — you insure them, feed them, walk them...

"Thankfully, I think we are now on the other side and things are improving."



**Rosie with
adorable
Arthur.**





Rosie's dogs at home.

To make matters more complicated, before Eric's second slipped disc and Cohiba's cancer diagnosis, Rosie had committed to adopting a fourth dog. So, when Arthur arrived from Romania, filthy and frightened, she wondered whether she was doing the right thing.

CARTOON CHARACTER

"I first saw Arthur's photo on charity The Pack Project's Instagram feed and said out loud: 'I want that!'" recalled Rosie, who managed to catch her husband during a moment of weakness. "He looked like a cross between a bat and the cartoon character Pepe Le Pew, and his story appealed to me — he'd been found with his siblings in a plastic bag in a wood."

"I've found it difficult, but it's the choice you make when you have dogs."

Rosie hoped that, being a puppy, Arthur would settle more easily into life with a toddler and three other dogs, and all the early signs looked positive.

"Despite stinking to high heaven and hating his first bath, Arthur sat down after his tiring three-day journey and went to sleep," said Rosie, who took great care introducing him to Eric, Harry, and Cohiba, who all happily accepted him.

But while Cohiba and Eric were both in recovery, all Arthur wanted to do was play

with them. Worried about the damage caused by the young terrier jumping on Eric's back, as well as causing stress to Cohiba, Rosie seriously considered rehoming him.

"But I'm so glad I didn't as he has settled in really well now and we're managing OK — he's lovely and very cute."

Rosie says her motivation to rehome rescues, and to support two small charities with an ethos close to her heart, comes from having something in common with them.

"I have felt the underdog for a lot of my



Rosie meets one of the rescues in Romania.

life and feel they are too. I am all for the underdog," she confessed.

"Not many people know about the Last Chance Hotel and The Pack Project; both are running on empty and operate from hand to mouth in order to save dogs that would otherwise be euthanised. They are rehabilitated, rehomed, and have amazing lives."

Rosie explained that the Cornwall-based Last Chance Hotel takes in animals who really are in the last chance saloon: ex-bait and former fighting dogs, the sick, the old, and the terminally ill. Those who are too damaged to leave the sanctuary, after a lifetime of neglect and abuse, live out their days surrounded by peace and love.

"I used to go to Cornwall when 'Doc Martin' was being filmed, and, at the time, the charity was looking for a patron," said Rosie, who opened its first fun day and dog show, and donated her fee from ITV's 'Celebrity The Chase', which helped to raise awareness and increase traffic to the charity's website.

"They had a lot of bad luck before Christmas when bad weather destroyed sheds and buildings. As well as money, a carpenter willing to donate their time would be a real bonus," continued Rosie, who donates to both charities each month and promotes them through her social media channels.

The actor, who is also known for her role in ITV police drama 'The Vice', is equally passionate about The Pack Project, founded



How do you choose which dogs to take?



The dogs are eager for a fuss.

"You could see in the dogs' eyes they had lost all hope and knew their fate."

less than three years ago by Laura Walker, to set up neutering programmes and find homes for stray dogs across Europe.

AMAZING JOB

"I love Laura's ethos," added Rosie, who's the charity's first celebrity ambassador. "The Pack Project is doing an amazing job and has already rehomed around 250 dogs. While funds towards its neutering programme or a van are desperately needed, my push this year is to try to raise enough money to buy them an industrial washing machine and dryer, or maybe even source one from a laundrette that's closing down."

In December, Rosie returned from a three-day fact-finding trip to Romania, where she helped film a YouTube documentary, saw first-hand the scale of the country's stray dog problem, met the animals looking for homes, and learned what the charity is trying to achieve.

"The pound was not a great experience," reflected Rosie, who also spent a day helping out at Care for Dogs Romania, The Pack Project's partner rescue in Brasov. "In fact, it was horrendous and heartbreaking. You could see in the dogs' eyes they had lost all hope and knew their fate. How do you choose which dogs to take from the 200 or so that will be put to sleep? All you can do

is take the ones who come up to the bars to beg for your help. You just save the ones you can, the ones you have room for."

Rosie got stuck into cleaning the rescues' kennels, breaking ice on the dogs' water bowls, and feeding and walking them.

"The dogs were so excited to see me that they kept jumping up for fuss, and even after I'd had a hot shower where I was staying, I still found bits of poop in my eyebrows and hair when I got home!" laughed Rosie, who is offering to auction a dinner date, prop off the 'Holby City' set, or even the award she won for Best Drama Star at the 2019 Inside Soap Awards, so both charities can benefit.

"The trip was exhausting and emotional, but worth it as we managed to save five or six dogs," she said.

Despite this harrowing experience, Rosie remains committed to improving the lives of as many dogs as possible, both at home and abroad.

"Life without dogs would be rubbish," she concluded. "It would be the worst thing for me — I love them far too much!"

For more information or to donate, foster, or offer a dog a permanent loving home, visit www.lastchancehotel.org and www.facebook.com/thepackprojectuk/

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Pointers are full
of personality.

Feel the love!

Recall may be an issue, but there's no denying the gentle, lovable — and slightly goofy — personality of the Pointer, says **Julie Hill**.

Pointers make good family pets — but they also like to gallop on the moors," said Patricia Eldridge, secretary of the Pointer Club.

"They were imported hundreds of years ago, from the European mainland to do a job of work. The Pointer wasn't bred to do anything other than find game birds (partridge, grouse, pheasant) and they're still used for that purpose now, in field trials.

"They were originally bred to quarter the ground, and range over hundreds of acres to find these birds.

"Currently, the bloodlines are divided between working and show dogs. Both types need careful training on the recall; their instinct is to go — and remember they're known for their stamina more than their speed."

Although working Pointers excel in field trials today, many live happily as beloved — if lively — family pets. The Pointer Club recommends training for all Pointers, and offers help with this.

Many dogs have a reputation for enjoying running, but there are sprinters, and there are marathon runners in the dog world — and the Pointer qualifies as the latter.

"If you're looking for a jogging partner, a Pointer could be a great choice," said Patricia. "They have wonderful temperaments, and need regular exercise. They are described in our standard as an aristocratic breed.

"For a family dog, you need to go for a show-bred Pointer, as working lines are more 'hyper'. You do need to look out for tiny white hairs on clothes and furniture — and they love a cuddle!"

POINTER FACT FILE

With thanks to Lynda Rayner and Heather Smith of The Pointer Club.

- **Life expectancy:** 12 – 15 years.
- **Price:** £800 – £1,100 for a puppy; a lot more for a fully trained dog.
- **Size (at withers):** Dogs: 63 – 69cm; bitches: 61 – 66cm.
- **Weight:** 23 – 32kg.
- **Coat care:** A brush and the occasional bath. The dogs have natural oils in their coats that help protect them in all weathers, so shampooing isn't necessary.
- **Health status:** No known points of concern. Because they are often out and about in grassy areas, they may occasionally develop allergies to pollens and mould spores, and ear infections. Seed ingestion can be a more serious problem. Cut paws are another potential occurrence.
- **Character:** Noble, refined, and very alert, they have staying power and speed. A sensitive breed, they are non-aggressive, kind, and gentle. They're very easy to live with if all their exercise requirements are met. Equally at home in front of a warm fire or out on a freezing moor.
- **Trainability:** Pointers are very biddable and extremely intelligent. It should be remembered that they were bred for a purpose, and this instinct is very powerful. Working Pointers have been selectively bred, for centuries, for their natural hunting instincts and biddability. Careful consideration should be given to a consistent and committed training regime because of these traits. However, this does vary from Pointer to Pointer, as each dog is an individual, and a training method that may work for one does not necessarily work for another.
- **Exercise requirements:** They require at least one hour free running every day. It is essential that they are trained for a good recall from a very early age.



A familiar Pointer
pose — doing what
they love best.

POINTER Q&As

OWNER: BONNIE CHURCH, STRATFORD ON AVON, WARWICKSHIRE.

Tell us about your dogs.

"I have two Pointers: Prince and foster dog Angel. Previously, I had two English-bred Pointers called Buddy and Horace."

Why did you pick this breed?

"I researched the breed and found them to be generally healthy, with less of the genetic issues that other breeds seem to have. I wanted a gentle and amiable family dog, as I have three sons, and a dog who might enjoy an active life in a rural area, but wouldn't require a working role or job — who was happy to be a family pet."

Where did your dogs come from?

"Buddy and Horace were pedigree Pointers from UK breeders with good reputations, but Prince and my foster Pointer, Angel, were from SOS Serbian Pointer Rescue, and they were bred in Serbia. They have the same amiable temperaments and share all of the traits of UK-bred Pointers."

What have been your biggest challenges with your dogs?

"Taking on rescue and foster dogs might be seen as challenging; you don't know the history of the dogs or what they've been through. But actually the rescue Pointers have been delightful, loving, and have integrated very well into family life."

"It's important to train Pointers and focus on recall, as they can be quite focused on a scent and then go selectively deaf!"

What have been your happiest times together?

"In the woods; it's a joy to watch Pointers 'work', especially when you have two. I've had so many beautiful and peaceful walks with my Pointers."

"They've brought so much happiness to us as a family, made us laugh, and they love nothing better than cuddling up on the sofa with their humans in the evenings."

"They are lovely natured dogs, and they are a pleasure to own."

Have your dogs turned out to be what you expected?

"Better! After owning UK-bred Pointers, I wasn't sure what Serbian-bred Pointers would be like and how they'd differ. But Pointer traits are strong, and the Serbian



Image: Bonnie Church.

Bonnie with Angel.

dogs share the same happy, friendly, and loving nature that UK-bred Pointers have."

Any ongoing issues?

"Not really; apart from recall when they're focused on a scent. You have to take care with rescue dogs to follow careful instructions, but any reputable rescue organisation will support you with this."

Any advice to other potential owners of this breed?

"Pointers are best in an active, semi-rural home where they can have plenty of exercise. They can be couch potatoes, but they still need a good walk and to run. They prefer somewhere comfy and draught-free to sleep."

Sum up your dogs in one sentence.

"Amiable, happy, elegant, healthy, and great dogs for active families."

How easy are they to care for?

"Very — they require little grooming, and they're clean. I don't think they shed that much compared to other breeds; the short fur is soft and almost self-cleaning, as the mud just falls off!"

Would you have another dog of this breed?

"Oh yes, definitely. I'll always have Pointers for as long as I can. I couldn't be without them."

How have you found training your dog?

"Fairly straightforward; they're intelligent, they want to please, but they can be a bit stubborn as they have minds of their own."

What activities do you and your dogs most like to share?

"Family time; long walks in the countryside followed by cuddles on the sofa, as my dogs love nothing better than to be snuggled up with us in the evenings."



POINTERS RULE!

We asked our online fans about their lovable Pointers

Sarah Jones, Leeds, West Yorkshire.

"They are such a lovely breed to live with — I have four! They are so loving, and almost human in their antics. They love to be involved in all aspects of family life. Probably the most challenging aspect of their behaviour, if you are not used to them, is their need to gallop, and they will exercise a long way away from you! Definitely not for an owner who doesn't have the confidence to let their dogs off-lead!"



Sarah's four Pointers.

Image: Sarah Jones.

Heather Smith, Sevenoaks, Kent.

"The most wonderful thing about them is their sheer exuberance, pace, stamina, and style. It is so exciting to see them hunting systematically in search of game birds, and when they get a scent of the bird it is similar to an emergency stop; they instantaneously freeze on point, heather flying in a cloud of dust at the impact!"

"The funniest thing we ever encountered was while training on Kintyre; our lovely black and white Pointer Diana fell and completely submerged herself in a peat bog, and then emerged from the earth like a brown apparition!"



Diana emerging from the peat bog.

Image: Heather Smith.

JUDY — THE POINTER WHO BECAME A PRISONER OF WAR

Robin Hutton, author of the book 'War Animals: The Unsung Heroes of World War II', published in 2018, said of Judy: "I cried for three days when I finished writing her story. She was the first — and only — official prisoner of war dog. She was a mascot on the gunboat HMS Grasshopper, which was attacked by Japanese aircraft, forcing the crew to abandon ship and head to the nearest land. They got stranded on a small, deserted island that didn't have any food, water, or inhabitants. Judy was able to find a live spring — a vital water supply — for them."

The group set off in the hope of meeting up with a ship that would take them to safety. Judy led the soldiers over 100 miles through the Sumatran Jungle, defending them against wild animals. Unfortunately, they got to their rendez-vous a week late, and were all taken to a prisoner of war camp. A soldier called Frank Williams bonded with Judy.

Judy inspired the prisoners to survive, hunting in the jungle at night to supplement their meagre rations, but Frank became terrified his captors would kill and eat Judy. "Judy had a litter of



Soulmates — Judy with Frank Williams.

puppies. Frank took one of the puppies to the camp commander who was a dog lover. Frank said: 'I'll give you this puppy if you will protect Judy and make her a prisoner of war,'" said Robin. "The commander agreed."

Frank's prisoner number was 81, and Judy was assigned number 81A. "She came home to a hero's welcome, and received the Dickin Medal (the animals' equivalent of the Victoria Cross)."

Image: PDSA Archives.

The Pointer

● Well balanced, elegant, graceful, aristocratic, the Pointer's outline is a series of curves.

● Short, soft fur.

● Well-muscled body.

● Powerful legs for long range running.

● Finely pointed tail.

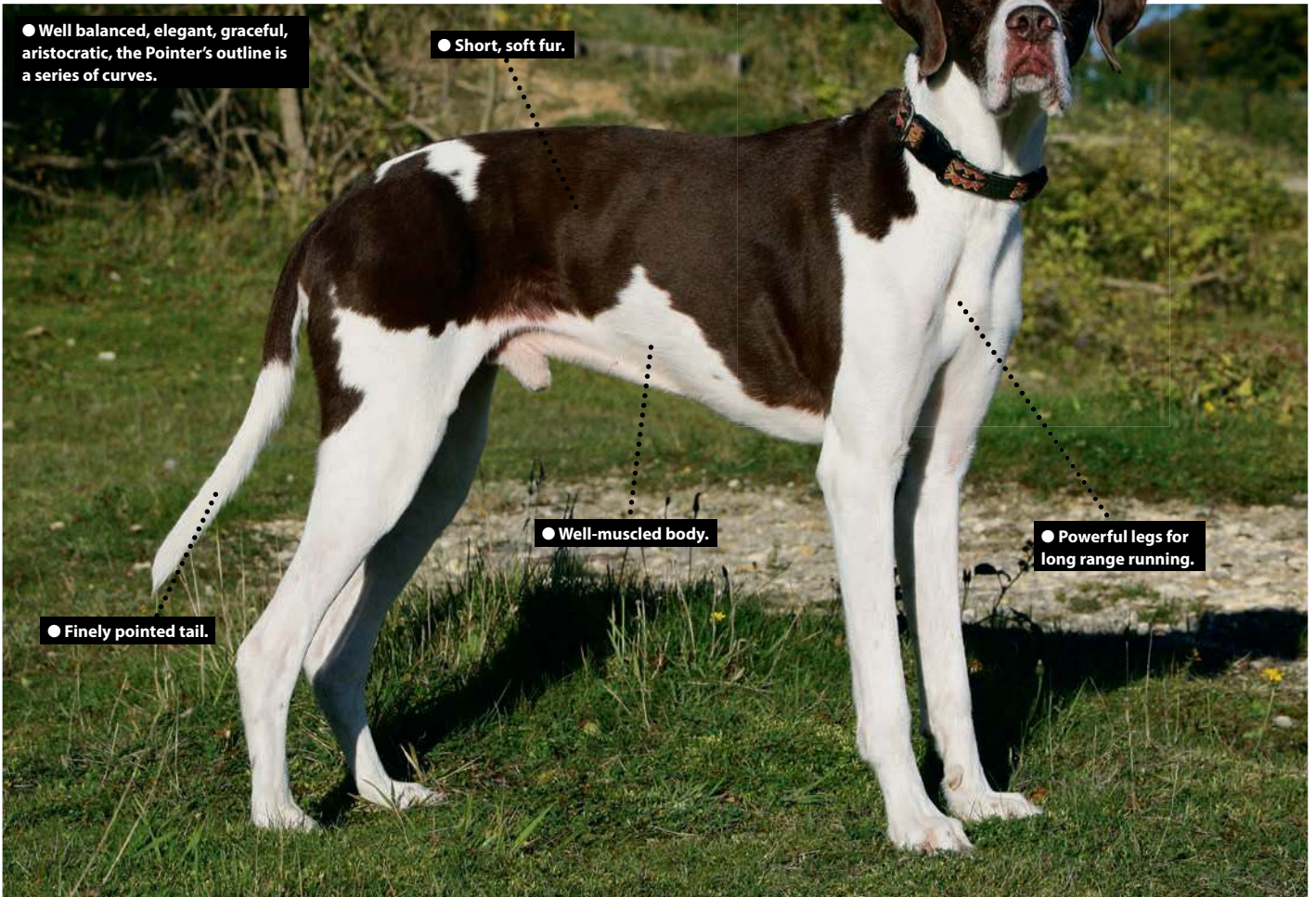


Image: KA9 Photo.

Michael and his Pointers at an appropriately named pub!



POINTER Q&As

OWNER: MICHAEL BROOKER, BICESTER, OXFORDSHIRE.

Tell us about your dogs.

"We have two pedigree Pointer bitches: Luna (orange and white), aged three years, and Purdey (black and white), aged 21 months.

"They're very different. Luna's from a show dog line, and Purdey's from a field trials championship line.

"Luna's relaxed, and given the chance would spend most of the day lazing around on a sofa. Purdey's sharper and driven. She'll happily stalk birds in the garden, alert to everything."

Why did you pick this breed?

"We wanted a medium-sized dog. We didn't really know the breed, but all the research we did indicated that they were affectionate, co-existed with other animals, were sensitive, active, and had a low-shedding coat."

Where did your dogs come from?

"We bought Luna from a breeder in the Northamptonshire area, and Purdey from a breeder in the Kent area."

What have been your biggest challenges with your dogs?

"We have had a number of challenges!

"We had trouble with Luna's recall. I often used to meet a group of Spinoni and a Bracco where we walked. If Luna sensed they were about, even half a mile away, she'd run off, find them, and join their pack.

"Purdey as a puppy was, at times, a bit of a nightmare. Not only would she randomly dig up the garden, but she developed a liking for ripping open soft toys. This progressed to ripping up her beds, and progressed further to our soft furnishings. At times, it drove us to the edge of despair. Two of the biggest victims from all this were two quality dog beds, which really upset us."

What have been your happiest times together?

"Now that both of them have matured, it is an absolute joy to see them running freely together.

"The affection both dogs give is immense — both to one another and to us."

Have they turned out to be what you expected?

"The first 18 months were tough with both dogs. Having got past their first seasons, everything suddenly changed for the better. We can now take them out on walks without having to worry, take them to bars/restaurants, and socialise with other dogs. From a difficult beginning, they have both turned out better than we hoped for."

Any ongoing issues?

"The only ongoing issue for us is taking care to avoid anywhere with grazing sheep. We've had a couple of sheep experiences that didn't go too well."

Any advice to other potential owners of this breed?

"They're a wonderful, affectionate breed. They need daily exercise for an hour or more off the lead — in all weather."

Sum up your dogs in one sentence.

"A strong-willed and stubborn breed, with oodles of affection and goofiness."

How easy are they to care for?

"Very. Any mud or dirt on their coats generally dries up and falls off. Grooming is very easy, with a soft, short-toothed, rubber brush. They moult short white hairs known as 'Pointer glitter', and this is something you have to learn to live with."

Would you have another of this breed?

"I think two is enough for now, but the fact that we have two, indicates that clearly the answer is YES!"

How have you found training?

"Training has gone well. They do get bored quite quickly, and keeping the training interesting for them is the key. They have both loved short sessions, maybe five minutes, before their focus dwindles. Having a super-smelly, tasty treat is important."



POINTERS RULE!

Gareth Evans, Haslington, Cheshire.

"My Pointer is called Macy. The best thing is that she runs and runs! We do cani-cross with her. The worst thing is that she hasn't got any recall so can't be let off the lead. After we got her and bonded with her, we tried to let her off on a beach on Anglesey (with a tracker on) — she ran 2.7 miles down the beach on her own, without stopping!"



Gareth and Macy competing at bikejor.

Image: Andrea Reynolds.

Jenny Petfield, Harlow, Essex.

"My dog, Bella, is a Pointer X German Shorthaired Pointer. 'Counter surfing' is normal for a Pointer, as is lying in the most uncomfortable positions, twisted round, legs up in the air — that's if they're not sitting on your lap. Privacy and personal space goes right out of the window with a Pointer. They have their own minds, can be stubborn, tear up many of your cushions, chew, and eat things you forgot to put away, but what you get the rest of the time is a really friendly, goofy, funny, loving best friend."



Pointer X German Shorthaired Pointer Bella.

Image: Jenny Petfield.

Next month

The Miniature Schnauzer.

INFO: For more information about Pointers, visit The Pointer Club website: www.thepointerclub.co.uk or check out the Kennel Club: www.thekennelclub.org.uk

Dog SHOPPING

Put a spring in your step this month with these handy new products and services.

AMAZON GOES GRAIN FREE

Amazon.co.uk has added a new grain-free range of dog food to its Lifelong brand of pet supplies.

Developed by pet nutritionists and overseen by vets, Lifelong's Grain Free premium recipes are made with high-quality fresh lamb, salmon, or chicken, and contain no artificial flavours, colours, or preservatives.

● **Key feature:** The Lifelong Grain Free

range offers 100 per cent complete and balanced nutrition for dogs in adult, puppy, or senior versions, and in medium and large breed, or small breed options.

● **Price:** From £19.99.

● **Size:** 1.5kg – 5kg.

● **Available from:** www.amazon.co.uk/lifelong



WELL VERSED!

Published by The Book Guild Publishing, 'Tails You Win' is an engaging collection of poems written from the dogs' perspective.

Freelance journalist, teacher, and artist Gill Rowe charmingly captures the traits and personalities of 50 different dogs in this anthropomorphic canine A-Z, starting with the Afghan Hound and Airedale Terrier.

Many breeds featured are old favourites, others less familiar, but there's something for everyone in this cheery homage to dogs.

This is the author's seventh book of original metric rhyming verse, which was inspired by observing a cross-breed playing with a Havanese in her local park in London.

● **Key feature:** Contains beautiful hand-drawn illustrations by Jennifer Taggart.

● **Price:** £7.99.

● **Available from:** www.bookguild.co.uk



ON TRACK

Keep tabs on your dog's whereabouts and well-being, thanks to advanced fitness tracking from Vodafone's new V-Pet Tracker.

If your canine companion goes astray, you can use this Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and GPS tracker to view his whereabouts through an app on your smartphone. Live tracking gives an update on your pet's location every three seconds, and will turn itself off if you stop using the tracker for more than five minutes, to avoid draining the battery.

The Safe Zone and Virtual Leash modes provide instant alerts if your dog moves out of Wi-Fi or Bluetooth range, while you can set up the geofencing feature by drawing your own virtual boundary.

The V-Pet Tracker also monitors everything your dog does — from sleeping and eating to walking and running — to give an overview of calories burned based on his breed — perfect for those watching their weight.

● **Key features:** The V-Pet Tracker can withstand rough and tumble play and wild weather walks, has a battery life of 10 days (dependent on usage), is waterproof, and has a useful LED light.

● **Price:** An upfront cost of £49.50 (with 12 months' free service).

● **Available from:** eshop.vodafone.com/uk



POPULAR PETWEIGHTER DOWNSIZES

The clever 'dog bowl that stays' has proved so successful that a smaller size has been created to cater for messy mini mutts.

PetWeighter Small has been launched to complement its bigger brother, and is ideal for puppies and more compact canine breeds.

Made by award-winning British family business Peak Pet Products, PetWeighter Small boasts the same unique design that prevents spills and mess at feeding time.

Strong and sturdy, the detachable two-part PetWeighter Small comprises a removable plastic bowl on top of a base that can be filled

with sand or water, which prevents it from moving, even if accidentally kicked.

● **Key features:**

Dishwasher-friendly, PetWeighter Small's rounded corners make it chew resistant, while its elevated height is kinder on older dogs' joints.

● **Size:** Height 168mm X width 192mm X depth 192mm.

● **Colours:** Red, pale blue, baby pink, or hot pink with a mid-grey base, or pearly white and platinum with a dark grey base.

● **Price:** £19.99.

● **Available from:** www.petweighter.com and Amazon.





ALL IN A LATHER

Shropshire-based Mutneys Professional Pet Care Ltd has added the vegan luxury Petuxe dog shampoo to its range of ethical and sustainable products.

These innovative eco-friendly and cruelty-free products have been tested on humans, not animals, and extensively trialled by professional groomers. They gently cleanse, hydrate, and revive the coat's natural texture, using essential vitamins and organic olive oil to nourish and protect skin.

● **Key features:** Petuxe has shampoos specifically formulated for black coats, long and straight hair, sensitive skin, white coats, and puppies, plus there's a conditioner spray too, all producing show-worthy results.

● **Price:** £15 – £65; the sensitive skin shampoo retails at £19 – £85, and the conditioner spray costs £13.

● **Size:** 500ml or 5l.

● **Available from:** www.mutneys.com/shop



CLICK AND COLLECT!

This clever 2-in-1 Whistle Clicker combines the functions of two of Mikki's most popular training aids.

It offers a high-pitch whistle for recall, and a large button clicker to reinforce positive training behaviour.

● **Key features:** Mikki's lightweight clicker comes complete with a lanyard so it can be worn comfortably around your neck or alternatively stored via its belt hook for hands-free training.

● **Price:** £4.99.

● **Colours:** Red with black or black with red.

● **Available from:** All good pet stores; visit www.mikkipet.com to find stockists.

VAX CLEANS UP!

The new cordless VAX GLIDE all-in-one hard floor cleaner not only takes the chore out of housework by vacuuming, washing, AND drying, but it kills 99.9 per cent of bacteria too.

Dirt, dust, dog hairs, muddy paw- and footprints and food spilled on hard surfaces like wood laminates, hardwood floors, stone, vinyl, and ceramic tiles, are no match for this smart cleaner, which also boasts DirtTracker LED headlights.

VAX GLIDE's twin-tank technology mixes VAX solution and clean water to extract dirt, which is lifted away by an advanced multi-surface brushroll and collected in its dirty water tank. Finally, this clever cleaner's



mess-free auto-clean system rinses the machine, leaving it ready for next time.

The innovative VAX GLIDE is powerful, lightweight, versatile, and easy to manoeuvre around corners and furniture.

● **Key features:** All five models in VAX's new range feature shareable technology and are powered by its ONEPWR advanced, lithium-ion battery, which gives up to 30 minutes run time without recharging.

● **Price:** £249.99.

● **Available from:** www.vax.co.uk

TRAILBLAZERS!

Performance dog gear company Ruffwear is celebrating the relaunch of its Front Range Collection, inspired by Colorado's Rocky Mountains.

Introduced in 2014, the original all-day adventure harness has sold more than a million units and become an iconic Ruffwear product. Its makeover features updated materials and colours and improved durability, but still maintains unbeatable canine comfort and enhanced control for owners.

The collection is completed by a co-ordinating Front Range lead, which boasts a padded handle and lightweight Crux Clip attachment, and — new for 2020 — the Front Range collar, featuring an easy-to-use, side-release buckle.

● **Key feature:** The Front Range Harness is an ideal training tool for dogs who tend to pull on the lead.



● **Colours:** Twilight grey, campfire orange, red sumac (new), hibiscus pink, huckleberry blue, and tumalo teal.

● **Sizes (harness):** XXSmall, XSmall, Small, Medium, Large/XLarge.

● **Price:** £44.95 (harness), £24.95 (lead), £16.95 (collar).

● **Available from:** www.ruffwear.co.uk

WHOLESOME AND TASTY

Yorkshire-based pet food brand Pure Pet Food has added a ninth recipe to its range.

Wholesome Chicken contains 100 per cent human grade and grain-free ingredients, including more than 60 per cent chicken breast and thigh, cranberry, linseed, chicory root, sweet potato, and salmon oil.

● **Key features:** All recipes, including Wholesome Chicken — the company's most palatable yet — are made with fresh ingredients that are gently preserved by removing the moisture, leaving the meals dense in nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. They are then delivered to customers' doors in dehydrated and freeze-dried form, and only need water to be added to create convenient, low processed meals.

● **Price:** £35.99.

● **Available from:** www.purepetfood.com





The whole experience boosted the rescues' confidence.

Second Chance Salon

Giving confidence to rescue dogs and raising money for the charities that have rescued them — that's the aim of a ground-breaking grooming event set to take place later this month. Sue Corfield reports.



The show is the brainchild of Jitka Krizova, a groomer and entrepreneur.

It's a sad fact that many unwanted dogs enter rescue centres not only feeling neglected and unloved, but looking that way too.

And, with the immediate pressure on staff to feed and rehome the dogs in their care, grooming is not always top of the list.

But, thanks to a new event, lots of unkempt rescue dogs are getting their moment in the spotlight, with a pamper day that will get them ready to find their new forever homes, and raise funds to help the rescue centres that they represent.

The Vita Canis Style to Rescue Show is a grooming show for rescue dogs, being held at the Kennel Club Buildings, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire on April 26.

This year's show will be the third. In 2018, the first-ever grooming competition for rescue dogs was held in the UK, and raised almost £4,500 for the rescues attending — Wheels to Paws UK, Many Tears Animal Rescue, Hessa's Homeless Hounds, Petwelfare Stafford, Poodles from Portugal, and Scottish Terrier Emergency Care Scheme (STECs). In 2019, the show raised over £7,500, and in 2020 the organisers are hoping to raise even more.

The show is the brainchild of Jitka Krizova, a groomer and entrepreneur who established her company, Vita Canis, to provide dogs with completely natural aromatherapy products. Jitka is a self-confessed 'dog-mad' person, and is passionate about improving the lives of dogs. She came up with the concept as a way of giving rescue dogs a fresh start in life.

Jitka said: "I am so proud that the show has taken off. It really is a win, win for everyone involved, and, more importantly, the dogs who take part."

THE EVENT

Not only is Style to Rescue a grooming show, but there are lots of stalls selling dog-related products, seminars covering dog therapies such as reiki, and a canine first aid course, along with grooming-related classes.

Liz Middleton a volunteer and fosterer for Many Tears, has brought rescue dogs along to the show since the first Style to Rescue in 2018. She said: "This is a grooming competition with a difference. The groomers have no idea what dog they will groom until they arrive and select an envelope. Dogs are either rescue dogs who are still looking for homes, or those

Gloria and Glitter's makeover opens the door to a new home

Gloria and Glitter were ex-breeding bitches who came to Many Tears Animal Rescue to find their forever homes once their breeding life was over.

Volunteer and former fosterer Sharon Gray explained: "As the Vita Canis Style to Rescue was approaching, I requested two foster dogs who would be suitable to attend. Many ex-breeding dogs (although not all) have never seen the outside world, are scared, don't like people, don't know how to walk on a lead, and most certainly will never have been groomed before.

"As a result, I knew this wouldn't be an easy request. The rescue addresses the health and welfare of every dog as soon as they enter the centre, and this includes a groom, but I asked that the girls be left in an unkempt state so that they could benefit fully from the show groom. The only harm in leaving them ungroomed would be to my nose! I had them in my home for a few weeks prior to the grooming competition, as we had to allow time for the neutering stitching to heal.

"Apart from being really smelly, they were the most gentle and playful girls — happy around people and very affectionate; they were a joy to have in my home even if it was very strange to them.

"Both Gloria and Glitter were beginners on the lead but walked with encouragement.

"Their confidence grew and I felt they

would cope well with the show experience.

"Unsurprisingly, they were a little shell-shocked with the day to start with as expected. It was a huge experience for them seeing so many people in one room like this for the first time in their lives, as well as having to cope with being bathed and groomed.

"Unlike most grooming competitions, Vita Canis Style to Rescue allows the groomers a much more relaxed approach to the competition, and as always the welfare of the dogs comes first, which means they can step out and give the dogs a break if and when they need it.

"However, the girls coped brilliantly and took it all in their stride. They were a little unsure of the dryers but the groomers were great with them and worked around it.

"They did an excellent job. Both girls certainly trotted out of there at the end of the day with a spring in their step, feeling so much better. I'm so pleased to say Gloria found her forever home directly through the people connected to Vita Canis Style to Rescue spreading the word about her. Glitter also found her forever home shortly afterwards, thanks to her stunning new look — well, who could resist?"

...and after.

Before & After



Gloria before her transformation...



already adopted. As a local supporter I took up the challenge and identified a number of dogs who could attend. We had a great day, raised money for the rescue, and were delighted to be asked to attend again in 2019.

"What can I say? 2018 was great, 2019 was absolutely fantastic — bigger, better, more groomers, more dogs, more stalls, a great atmosphere, and an impressive amount raised for the rescues that attended. Everyone was so friendly, and the needs of the dogs are of paramount importance, with groomers giving them regular breaks if necessary, to cope with the needs of nervous dogs or those with physical problems.

SUPERSTAR RESCUES

"The hall had a real buzz to it all day; it was fascinating to watch the grooming, and the groomers were so supportive of each other. The judges were very approachable, putting groomers at their ease, and were genuinely interested in the dogs. And the dogs, well they were just superstars!

"Many Tears Animal Rescue takes mainly ex-breeding dogs, many of whom need specialist veterinary care for eye and heart problems, and liver shunts to name just a few of the problems. The charity relies on fundraising and donations to ensure each dog receives the care he or she requires."

Patricia Wheeler, from Poodles from Portugal, commented: "Last year was our first time at Style to Rescue — it was a long drive for us and I must admit to being a tad concerned as to how the rescues would cope with such a long day and a busy environment.

"But my misgivings were unfounded. I entered the hall somewhat warily — no need! Despite the many vendors, spectators, competitors, and dogs, what instantly struck me was the overall calm that pervaded the venue. This event remained the same the whole day — calm, welcoming, happy, respectful, but above all, compassionate. Of course, everyone wants to win but somehow that didn't come across. By that I mean, the grooming competitors and the judges were only concerned with the welfare of the dogs, and desperately concerned that we were happy with the end result.

EMOTIONAL EVENT

"I wandered into the ring on a couple of occasions to see groomers doing their bit with nervous dogs in their laps or being cuddled, a couple of paralysed dogs were receiving so much affection. I was relieved I had tissues in my pocket as I found the day really rather emotional.

Disabled dogs
were catered for.



"This event
was calm,
welcoming, happy,
respectful..."

"The organisation was superb, so much to juggle, and never a raised voice or cross expression.

"We arrived home very late, tired but very happy, and the three little fluffies looked beautiful and had had a wonderful time with their very talented groomers."

Your Dog expert and contributor Joanne Angus, from Look North Grooming & Training Centre, a former member of Groom Team England, and well-known as a voice of the industry, took the Best in Show title

in 2019. She said: "Having not competed for many years, the idea of a rescue show really appealed to me as something different from the norm. It's all about giving back to the dogs who really need it and that is the core of what grooming is about — caring for dogs. I loved the idea of supporting the rescues, with the profits from the show all being donated to the rescue centres involved. Knowing Jitka as I do, she is the perfect person to run a show like this, with a lovely, relaxed atmosphere and every groomer supporting each other with no pressure to win.

"The support from the industry is growing, and it's fantastic to see the show go from strength to strength. I have the pleasure of being invited to judge this year and can't wait to see the transformations take place."



Image: Paul Felton Photography

"It's also about giving hope to the dogs and finding them new homes..."

INCA'S STORY

Hessa's Homeless Hounds rescues dogs from Romania and Spain, helps dogs from the UK — mostly ex-breeding bitches and studs who have been retired — and also takes unwanted pups from breeders. Inca, the Bedlington, was one of these.

She was rescued when she was nine years old. The founder of Hessa's Homeless Hounds, Hessa Riddett, had fostered her from a puppy and fallen in love with her, but as her rescue grew, along with the number of dogs in the house, she decided to let her go to a new home.

She said: "A lovely couple contacted me just after the show, offering her a home."

"They turned out to be friends of the lovely Linda who groomed her on the day and had seen her photo on Linda's Facebook page."

"It seemed like fate, as this couple had just lost their previous Bedlington who was also called Inca."

"I get regular updates and she is having a fantastic life."

Jitka is hoping that 2020 will be a new milestone. She said: "I think everyone who has attended this event in 2018 and 2019 would agree with me that this charity dog grooming competition for rescue dogs is not just about raising money to donate to the rescue centres — it's also about giving hope to the dogs and hopefully finding them new loving homes."

"It's about spoiling the rescues who

don't have their forever homes yet."

"It's for new groomers looking for some experience in competing (the competition is brilliant for groomers who've never competed, as it's more relaxing, and they have more time and less pressure)."

"Finally, it's about education and awareness, and a community coming together seeing old friends and meeting new ones!"

William — the braveheart

William, a five-month-old male Scottie pup with a previous heart condition, was taken along to the show by Cath Marchbank of Scottish Terrier Emergency Care Scheme (STECs Scottish Rescue).

Cath said: "William is a real sweetie. He was used to being bathed, brushed, and combed and I had let him hear the sound of clippers, which didn't frighten him at all. His coat was long and short in places as he had been clipped right down to undergo various scans and tests."

"He was handed into us here at Scottish Rescue as he had a very severe heart murmur. He's a well-travelled Scottie as we have seen quite a few heart specialists since he came to us."

"After much deliberation and all the vets working together, William finally went under anaesthetic to endure an eight-hour procedure at The Willows."

"He was the first dog to survive the procedure with such a deformed artery inside his heart."

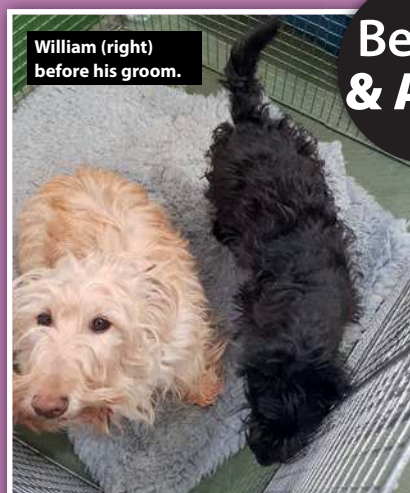
"William is a star at every level and we

felt he would cope well with the Style to Rescue experience and he certainly did."

"His groomer won an award for sympathy and handling."

"William has since been for further check-ups and his heart murmur has been reduced from severe to moderate."

"He now lives happily with adopters Caroline and Tony Hart and their rescue Westie, Bonnie."



William (right) before his groom.

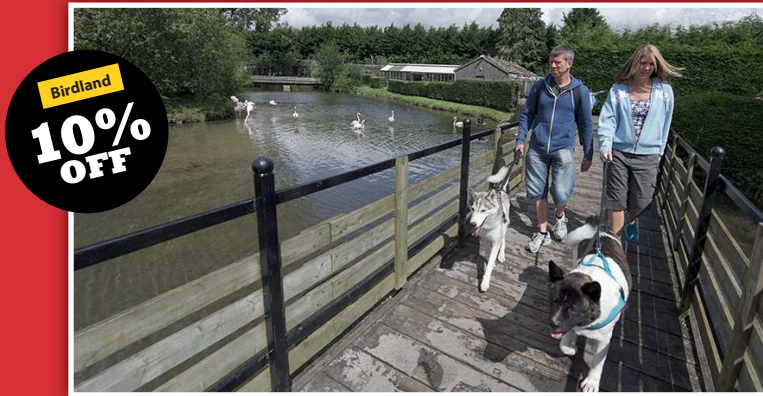
Before & After



Taking it in his stride on the grooming table.

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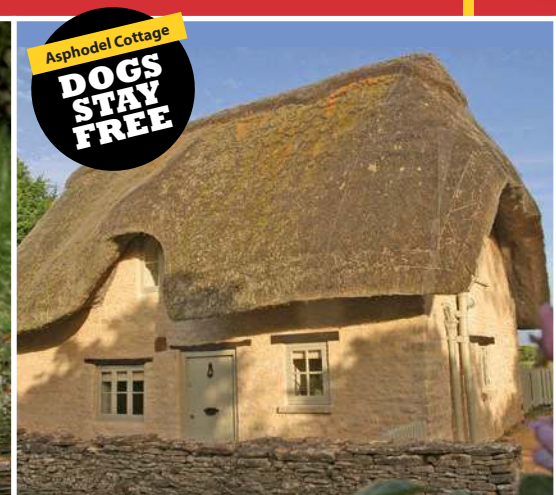
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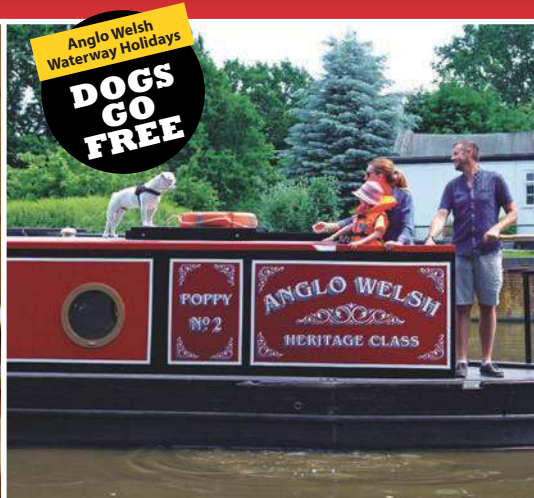
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Me and my dog

EVERYONE'S A WINNER!

When Perrie Eedy and her husband, Matt, signed up their overweight Beagle for a pet slimming club, little did they know how much they would benefit. **Joanne Bednall** reports.

Perrie Eedy and Matt Jordan may own the country's canine slimmer of the year, but despite their Beagle, Luigi, losing a third of his body weight in just six months, all three have ended up as winners, thanks to PDSA's Pet Fit Club.

Perrie, from Newport in Gwent, admitted that a combination of factors had led to their five-year-old hound's weight spiralling out of control. At his heaviest, Luigi tipped the scales at a whopping 29.10kg (4st 8lb) — 39 per cent over his ideal weight.

His huge appetite, a penchant for Sunday roasts, and a talent for performing tricks right next to the canine cookie jar, meant he was always going to be on the back paw when it came to watching his weight.

BEFORE



Before his transformation, Luigi would scoff and snooze.

AFTER



A slimline Luigi was crowned PDSA Pet Fit Club champ.

It's not just Luigi whose lifestyle has changed — Perrie has benefited too.

"My whole family are animal lovers and we've always felt the need to offer our dogs the odd little treat — just as you would give a gift to a person sometimes," explained Perrie, 28.

"But unbeknown to me, my nana, as well as my mum, were slipping Luigi treats under the dinner table, plus occasionally I gave him the leftovers from the Sunday roast."

Cheeky Luigi soon learned how to manipulate his humans into parting with further treats, by performing his repertoire of tricks — shaking a paw, lying down, spinning, and giving a 'high five' or 'high 10' — slap bang next to the cupboard containing a full tin of dog treats.

However, Perrie confessed her biggest mistake was not measuring Luigi's food accurately. "I always guessed at the correct amount of kibble and it turned out that I was over-feeding him," she explained.

"I hadn't realised three-quarters of a cupful twice a day was too much."

On top of this, the bulging Beagle was also receiving a daily dental chew, which Perrie assumed was good for his health.

"I thought these would help to keep his teeth clean but I later learned they are high in calories."

When it was pointed out by the local vet during a routine appointment that Luigi was becoming obese, Perrie knew they would have to take drastic action.

"We tried really hard to cut back on the treats, but without any specific advice or a detailed diet plan, we soon slipped back into our old habits," recalled Perrie, who added that lazy Luigi had no enthusiasm for exercise, preferring to curl up on his comfy bed and sleep rather than go for a walk.

LIGHTBULB MOMENT

Two months later, quite fortuitously, Perrie came across the PDSA's Pet Fit Club on Facebook — a six-month diet and exercise competition, specially tailored and overseen by the charity's vets and nurses — and she had a lightbulb moment.

"I thought it would provide the guidance and help we needed to devise a proper programme for Luigi," continued Perrie, who applied and received an email confirming Luigi had been selected as a finalist.

The portly Beagle and his owners were invited along to Cardiff PDSA Pet Hospital, where vet nurse Karen Jones took Luigi's photo, weighed and measured him, and noted down his vital statistics.

Karen put a plan in place that included a gradual increase in daily exercise combined with a total overhaul of his diet.

"We started off with a gentle, short daily walk — just around the block initially," explained Perrie. "Before, we didn't walk Luigi while I was recovering from an operation, if we were tired after a long shift at work, or in bad weather. But now we had the incentive to go out, no matter what."

"Karen recommended introducing a veterinary diet called Specific — like the doggy equivalent of a human SlimFast shake — aimed at making Luigi feel fuller for longer. And we bought digital scales so we knew exactly how much we were feeding him every meal."

Perrie and Matt also cut out all their dog's unhealthy snacks, instead giving him the occasional low-fat treat or a piece of carrot.

"It was such a relief to receive advice in a non-judgemental and non-patronising way," added Perrie, who was further bolstered when, at the first month's weigh-in, Luigi had lost some weight.

"It gave us faith that the programme was

"It has impacted all our lives for the better..."

working and really encouraged us to keep going, even though we couldn't actually see a difference for the first two or three months."

However, the couple soon realised there was an unintentional but welcome side-effect of Luigi's exercise plan, which was underpinning a transformation in their own lives.

"Around this time, we got married and moved house — walking Luigi was the perfect opportunity to explore our new area, plus we were now only a short drive from the beach," said Perrie. "We researched all-year-round dog-friendly beaches and discovered that Luigi loved the sand and got far more exercise off-lead following his nose."

Before long, the couple found that they, too, were enjoying their regular beach walks and were feeling healthier and fitter from the fresh air and extra exercise.

"Walking Luigi was also excellent rehabilitation following my operation," added Perrie, who was now committed to the PDSA's programme 100 per cent.

Soon, Perrie and Matt were exercising their Beagle for half an hour a day, incorporating hills and

fast walking into their routine. Perrie even bought a new bike and a special dog harness that clipped onto her waist, so she could cycle 5km to local dog-friendly pubs with Luigi.

And they even started running the same distance as well.

"Before, I didn't run and rarely cycled," confessed Perrie, who felt better physically and mentally every time she made the effort to go out.

"It has impacted all our lives for the better; we now take Luigi out for a walk without question first thing in the morning, which is a great kick-start to our day, and we spend more time outdoors discovering new places with him."

In fact, Perrie admitted that Luigi not only looks, but acts, like a different dog now he has shed 8.7kg (1st 5lb), and reached his target weight of 20.40kg (3st 3lb).

UNBELIEVABLE CHANGE

"Since overhauling his diet and exercise regime, the change we've seen in him has been unbelievable," she concluded. "Luigi has totally transformed from the dog we used to drag out on walks before; he's often running well ahead of us now and his energy levels are incredible — he's like a puppy again!"

"It's been an amazing experience and I'd recommend the PDSA's Pet Fit Club to anyone who needs help managing their pet's weight."

"Although we are delighted Luigi won the competition, it wasn't just about numbers on a scale, it was about how he felt. Seeing him so much happier and healthier is the best reward."

Luigi shows off his trim new figure.



Luigi's weight loss was overseen by PDSA vet nurse Karen Jones.

A POWER FOR GOOD

For former army dog handler **Debbie Caffull**, dogs have had a huge impact on her life and her career, as she explained to **Isabel George**.



Debbie and Pip on foot patrol in Afghanistan.

In 2003, Debbie Caffull happily donned her camouflage to 'follow the drum' and her dream.

Debbie wanted to show her family what she was made of, show herself what she was capable of, and — most important of all — spend every working day with dogs.

After completing operational tours of duty in Northern Ireland, Iraq, and Afghanistan as a Royal Army Veterinary Corps (RAVC) dog handler, Debbie decided to hang up her kitbag and embark on a career that was far less dangerous, but still had her love of dogs at its heart.

Her role at the RSPCA Birmingham Animal Centre can include supporting the charity's education team. "Getting the chance to talk to the children about how special and clever dogs are and how important they have always been in my life, is a very rewarding experience," said Debbie, "It's lovely to see children, of all ages and backgrounds, engage with the dogs and hear the, often sad, story behind their journey to the centre, and then see that all-important connection and respect for the animals taking place in real time. It's a little bit of magic!"

DOGS ALL DAY

Debbie knows how lucky she is to be able to take her own dogs, Zambra and Thunder, to work with her. But then she has had at least one dog alongside her every day of her working life, from Toby, her first spaniel search dog on her tour of duty in Northern Ireland, to Paddy, her brave and lovable Labrador, who survived alongside Debbie when their armoured vehicle was blown up in Iraq.

"I grew up in lovely Herefordshire with dogs all around me, mostly collies X spaniels. Moving into a career working with dogs was, I suppose, on the cards. I joined the army cadets when I was young and I also wanted to be a dancer, but the army won in the end, especially when



"...Pip, her 'angel in a fur coat', with whom she shared some frightening and challenging times..."

I discovered that I could train to be a dog handler.

It didn't take me long to rehome an army dog, Bailey, who lived at home with my parents. He was my first dog, and, in his own way, he helped me understand every dog I worked with in the army. I first met him out in Germany after he had just come back from being on tour in Iraq. I automatically took to him and his little quirks. He was the one who showed me how special it is to bond with a dog. In a way, I know Bailey is still with me."

During her career as an army dog handler, Debbie had the privilege of working with several military dogs, but it was Pip, her sparky little spaniel, her 'angel in a fur coat', with whom she shared some frightening and challenging times during her tour of duty in Afghanistan.

PARTNER PIP

Pip, an arms and explosives search (AES) dog, was her partner, working to create safe paths through most of Helmand Province towards the Kajaki Dam. Pip's skills at locating deadly IEDs (improvised explosive devices) were in high demand with the troops and special forces based in what was known to be — in 2008 — the most dangerous place in the world. ▶



Debbie recalled that time: "Every day Pip searched to keep all of us safe from IEDs and every night he shared my sleeping bag in the desert. I can honestly say that he was my best friend in the darkest of times, and in the most dangerous of places, where the threat of enemy bombs and snipers was always on our backs. We also lost colleagues, one of our own, and that's hard to get your head around, especially when you have to go out the same day and do the same job. I was lucky, I had Pip to shoulder my tears, so I was never alone."

Supporting the education team is only a small part of Debbie's current job with the RSPCA, but she loves seeing the big impact the education can have. It's the lighter moments of her time in the army that Debbie likes to share with the children who attend the charity's Animal Action days, or when she gives a presentation.

POCKET ROCKET

"When I tell them Pip was called the 'pocket rocket' because he worked so fast, and that his way of telling mummy there was a bomb was to wiggle his whole body like mad, I can see they are getting an idea of the bond soldiers share with their military working dogs.

"I hope there is another message, too, that hard work towards what you want can pay off. Many of the children who seek support through the educational department have their challenges in life; at school, or maybe with their health, but when they hear how dogs helped me to overcome my fears in the worst of times, it shows that dogs can make anything possible."

Debbie's job can also involve fostering some of the dogs who are recovering from treatment they have received at the centre, and building their trust and confidence in readiness for rehoming. Not surprisingly this brings her into contact with some very special canine characters,



Debbie's foster dogs have included Thor...



Debbie with spaniel Zambra (liver and white), and Sprocker Thunder (black and white).

"Dogs enrich our lives in so many ways... They really do have the power to make us better people."

including Thor, a Husky, who arrived in a very emaciated state and generally neglected condition. In Thor, Debbie saw a young dog recover, learn to trust humans again, and find his playfulness, ready to enjoy a new life with caring owners.

Fern, the Whippet, who had to have one leg amputated as it was so severely injured, was also one of Debbie's short-term foster pups. "Fostering really is the best bit of my job!" said Debbie. "To witness dogs like Thor and Fern, who arrive so desperate for help and then, after so much love and care, go to happy, new homes has to be the ultimate in job satisfaction. To see them get a much-deserved second chance really is amazing and we all know that dogs like Thor and Fern always pay back with an endless stream of unconditional love."



... and Whippet Fern.

Debbie currently shares her home in Worcestershire with Zambra and Thunder. Zambra, a liver and white spaniel, is the dog Debbie describes as her 'rock' as he was there to help her through the transition of leaving the army and hitting civvy street.

"Zambra's name means 'gypsy dance' and it still suits him as he's very lively despite his cancer diagnosis last year. It's affecting his

right salivary gland but not even that is stopping him smiling.

"Thunder is a crazy wriggler, as most Springer X Cocker Spaniels are. Zammy looks at him in his usual stoic way, especially when Thunder disgraces himself by being cheeky and running after birds! As he is now my running buddy this can be very entertaining — and embarrassing."

LIVING IN THE NOW

For Debbie, dogs and keeping fit go together. This combination has helped her cope with some dark times as well as the lighter moments in life: "When you're on the front line in a war zone, you see things you can't unsee and believe me it helped to have Pip beside me to work with, talk to, love, look after, and show me that each day is a new experience because dogs know how to forgive and live 'in the now'. Dealing with elements of the past isn't always easy but, for me, physical and mental fitness go together and when you add a dog to the mix it gets a whole lot easier."

Memories of Pip and the other dogs she partnered and trained in the army will never fade for Debbie. Instead, they poignantly scamper alongside the new characters she has since taken into her care.

"Dogs enrich our lives in so many ways. My life with dogs has made me who I am today," she said.

"Certainly, all the dogs I met and partnered during my army career made me incredibly proud of being a soldier, dog handler, and trainer. The bond you form with your military working dog is so close, so special; you absolutely trust each other with your life.

"Dogs really do have the power to make us better people."

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Your Dog Competitions

April 2020

Don't forget for your chance to win one of this month's great prizes **click below.**

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£2,500-worth of prizes

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As an Easter treat, we've got a double dose of giveaways for you this month — even more chances to win!

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For more information, visit www.wellness.co.uk or call 01855 565030.

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3 TO GIVE AWAY

6 TO GIVE AWAY

10 TO GIVE AWAY

36 TO GIVE AWAY

Got a problem with your dog?
Whether it's about behaviour, training, health, or general care, the Your Dog experts are here to help. Our panel includes some of the top names in the dog world, so you can rest assured that you are getting the best quality advice.

Just email your problem/query to editorial@yourdog.co.uk or, if you prefer, you can post it to 'Dog Answers' at our Bourne address (see page 3). You can also post your query on Facebook www.facebook.com/yourdogmagazine.



DOG Answers

DID YOU KNOW?

Teaching your dog a reliable recall keeps him safe, is more convenient for you, and stops you providing ammunition for the anti-dog lobby when he misbehaves and won't come back!

TRAINING

Why does she run off?

Teach your dog a reliable recall before letting him off-lead in open spaces.

Q I have a three-year-old Staffie X Golden Retriever called Misty, who has a beautiful nature, but regularly does a runner for up to an hour on our daily walks. She always comes back, but it's starting to get serious not knowing where she is for 60 minutes at a time and whether she is safe.

She is currently walked on-lead and let off in enclosed places, where we practise recall.

I am now in the market for a GPS tracker, but which one?

Paul Wright, email address.



Kate says: It's wonderful being able to give our dogs the opportunity to explore outside in order to enrich their lives, but, as you said, we need to ensure they are safe. The easiest way to do this is to make sure she is under

supervision at all times. This could be by walking her in fully enclosed areas so you know she can't escape, or on a long line so she has freedom to move around but isn't entirely loose, while you train her recall. This is because the more she practises the behaviour of running off, the

more it becomes 'normal' for her, and, therefore, the harder your recall training will be.

As recall is such an important behaviour to teach, you need to make sure it's worth it for your dog to come back to you. Although they love us very much, they see us every day so we might not be as exciting as what's on offer in the outside world!

Make your rewards for recall the best they can be — a combination of really tasty food, games with you, and having the opportunity to chase or play with toys she loves. Practise recall as much

as possible — in the house, the garden, and when out on walks, so she learns that the behaviour gets her lots of good stuff!

We haven't conducted any research on GPS trackers for dogs, so I couldn't recommend any specific brands or models. It would be good to have one as a back-up, just in case she does manage to get free. To make sure you can find where she is, I'd suggest getting one that isn't too large to ensure it doesn't bother her, is durable, and has a long battery life.

Introduce it to her carefully, so she is comfortable wearing it. Also, ensure her microchip details are up-to-date and that she is wearing an ID tag on her collar with your current contact details on.

We would always encourage training a good recall though, and managing your dog through the use of things like a long line.

A qualified trainer, who is registered with the Association of Pet Dog Trainers, will help you understand why she might be running off regularly, and give you useful techniques to encourage her to focus more on you, as well as help you to teach a solid recall. Using reward-based training methods, recommended by the registered trainer, will mean you both enjoy your walks more, and will help build a better relationship between you and your dog.

THE EXPERT PANEL



KATE ELLAM
is professional development canine behaviour officer at Dogs Trust.



TONY CRUSE
is a member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers and the Institute of Modern Dog Trainers.



VICKY PAYNE
BVetMed, MRCVS is a holistic vet based in East Sussex.



HOLLY MASH
BVSc, MRCVS specialises in herbal medicine, acupuncture, and nutrition.



JOANNE ANGUS
LCGI is a founder member of the Guild of Master Groomers.



JOHN BURNS
BVMS, MRCVS is a vet, and founder of feed company Burns Pet Nutrition.



STEPHEN JENKINSON
is access adviser to Your Dog, the Kennel Club, and local councils.

GROOMING

Grooming guidelines

Q How vital is it to groom short-haired dogs? My Pug is short haired and her coat always seems very silky and smooth; however, we rarely brush her, although we do wash her every few weeks. Do we need to have more of a grooming routine or are we right to go by how her fur looks and feels?

Bernadette Painter, Tyne and Wear.



Joanne says:

A short coat, such as a Pug's, requires minimal grooming;

they do, however, get a build-up of dead undercoat if this is not brushed or bathed out. As you are bathing your Pug on a regular basis, this will maintain her coat. Ensure you use a good quality shampoo specifically designed for dogs, and dry her thoroughly to help with dead coat removal. A good tool to use would be a rubber brush, which will help with coat removal and also stimulate the skin.

GROOMING

Which brush?

Q Which brush is the best choice for grooming a long-haired Poodle?

Debbie Hughes, London.



Joanne says: A Poodle's coat should be dense and of a harsh texture; it requires maximum grooming. As the coat does not shed, it is vital to brush on a regular basis to prevent any dead coat forming into mats. The best brush to use is a slicker brush. My favourites are the Activet brushes, which are available at www.redcape.co.uk



For a Poodle, a slicker brush is a vital item for your grooming kit.



The Pug's short coat requires minimal brushing.

TOP TIP

For more advice on grooming your Pug, visit www.pugdogclub.org.uk/about-pugs/caring-for-your-pug/grooming/

Quick-fire questions

WHAT'S WRONG WITH PUNISHING A 'NAUGHTY' DOG?

The bottom line is that if you punish one behaviour, you tend to create five additional, unwanted behaviours.

A punished dog makes a bad association with the environment and, above all, the owner. Punishment and reprimands can be a slippery slope, and the bond and trust between dog and owner weaken rapidly. It is smarter, and actually easier, to positively reinforce the behaviours you do want instead, so your dog chooses those in the future.

ARE CHILDREN AND DOGS REALLY A GOOD MIX?

Dogs and children can make fabulous companions and the benefits can be huge. Children who live with dogs take less days off school, have stronger immune systems, often get more exercise, and generally develop a greater empathy and better social skills than their non-pet-owning counterparts. However, this relationship takes work, understanding, and adult supervision.

Dogs and young children should never be left alone together. Children do not develop empathy until they are surprisingly old, and they are older still before they can transfer that empathy to another species. In addition, children do not recognise dog body language. In a recent survey of children under eight years old, most thought dogs showing their teeth were smiling.

DOG Answers

Dogs often get excited around children.



TRAINING

He goes ballistic!

Q I have a 16-month-old Springer Spaniel X Lurcher. Most of the time he's a good boy. However, when the family come to visit, with two grandchildren, he is a little demon. He rushes around, jumps up, play-bites, jumps on the furniture, and generally goes ballistic, until he's given 'time out'.

Pam Woolley, email address.



Kate says: At 16 months he's still quite young, so he might be easily excited if your grandchildren are playful

— young children can move quite quickly and make lots of noise.

Rather than giving him a 'time out' when he's getting more excitable, try to encourage calmer behaviour. It would be worth teaching him to settle, initially when your grandchildren aren't present, and then starting to introduce it when they visit.

You can keep him on-lead to ensure everyone is safe when your grandchildren are there, and reward him with something nice and tasty for any good behaviours he shows (such as sitting, looking at you, or generally just staying calm). It's important not to tell him off as you don't want him to have any negative experiences around your family. He may still struggle with this, so setting him up in another room with a nice, comfy bed, and a tasty, long-lasting chew, or a stuffed food toy, may help to keep everyone happy.

Seeking the help of a suitably qualified dog trainer, sourced through the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT), or behaviourist sourced via the Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour (ASAB) will help you to understand why he might be behaving this way. You can put together a plan for teaching him how to act in a more calm and safe manner.

Many dogs cope very well as a tripaw.



HEALTH

How can I help my soon-to-be tripaw?

Q My four-year-old Cockerpoo, Teddy, is having his left back leg amputated following a recent accident. Is there anything I can do to help him cope on three legs and make life easier for him? Also, how do I know if he is struggling following the operation?

Liam Durno, Cheshire.



Vicky says: Dogs adapt really well to life on three legs.

You may want to invest in a well-fitting harness that you can use to help support your dog in the early post-op stages while he gets used to being a tripaw. Obviously, his remaining limbs will now be under more strain

than before and this can lead to muscle soreness, and arthritis in the long term. I suggest a good quality joint supplement as well as keeping his weight down. I have treated several patients post amputation with acupuncture, hydrotherapy, and physiotherapy to help them with muscle pain and to improve their mobility.

GROOMING

Lab is having a mega moult

Q My Labrador has started moulting large clumps of hair around his back and the back of his legs. He usually moults twice a year, which is pretty normal; however, the amount of fur seems unusual. Should I be worried? Are there any grooming tips that will help with this?

Louise Hall, Oxfordshire.



Joanne says: Moulting is a regular occurrence for double-coated breeds and quite often continues

throughout the year due to central heating. If the moulting is resulting in complete hair loss, it could signify underlying health issues and a veterinary check-up would be recommended.

I would use a de-shedding tool such as the Furminator to help with undercoat removal. Alternatively, take your dog for

a full professional groom, which will help to get rid of all the dead coat.

Find a qualified groomer at www.thegroomersspotlight.com



Labradors tend to moult profusely.

HEALTH

What is causing his smelly breath?

Q My Cocker Spaniel has really bad breath. I feed him a dry food diet and he is otherwise well. We brush his teeth regularly; however, within an hour of doing it, the smell is back.

Leanna Penton, Leicestershire.



Vicky says:

I would recommend a check-up at your veterinary practice to see if this is a normal doggy smell or something to worry about. The aroma might be coming from your dog's ears or lip folds rather than from



Regular tooth brushing can keep canine mouths fresh.

his mouth. If the smell is from his mouth, there may be an infected tooth at the back where it is hard to see, or the smell could be from licking and emptying the anal glands. In other cases, bad breath is the result of indigestion, especially if your dog burps frequently.

Quick-fire questions

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY DOG IS UNHAPPY IN THE CAR? I THINK HE MAY BE, BUT I'M NOT SURE.

While some indications that your dog is unhappy may be obvious, such as vomiting or barking, others are more subtle and easily overlooked. Signs that all is not well include:

- Reluctance or refusal to get in the car.
- Vocalising, whining, yapping, barking, howling, or moaning.
- Drooling, panting, or lip licking.
- Shaking, trembling, or yawning.
- Inactivity and listlessness, or freezing into one position.
- Restlessness and constantly changing position, or jumping around and refusing to lie down.
- Destructiveness — tearing or scratching at the car interior, or chewing bedding.
- Vomiting, diarrhoea, or urination.
- Wanting to be close to you.
- Reactivity to movement outside the car, such as dogs, people, cyclists, or other cars.

TRAINING

Rehoming a rescue

Q Please could you give me some general advice about how to settle a rescue dog into the home?

Lennon Baxter, Lincolnshire.



Kate says: It's great that you've decided to adopt a dog.

Here are some good things to consider to help him settle in; however, they will need to be adapted depending on your dog's history and any behavioural/health problems he may have, so ensure you speak to someone from the rescue centre about any provisions first.

Some general advice is to make sure your dog has somewhere in your home where he can feel safe and that he knows is his space, for instance a cosy bed in a quiet area or a covered crate. Provide him with some of his own things so he can perform normal, fun, dog behaviours in an acceptable way, for instance giving him toys or cardboard to chew and play with so he's not tempted to chew furniture, and so on.

Make sure everyone living in the home is in agreement in terms of what you want from

the dog: for instance, will he be allowed on the furniture? How important is it for you to teach him to walk on a loose lead? Consistency is key for dogs to learn what we want them to do, so everyone should have the same expectations of him.

In terms of his behaviour, reward everything your dog does that you like — this will encourage more of these behaviours.

For instance, when he's first settling in you could give him a treat or play with a toy after he's toileted in the garden to encourage this.

If your dog does something you don't like, it's important to never punish him or tell him off. Try to ignore directly acknowledging that behaviour and encourage him to do something else instead. For

instance, if your dog mouths at you when saying hello or when excited, calmly encourage him to take hold of a toy instead.

It's important to take things slowly and not overwhelm new dogs with lots of new situations/ environments, so try to keep your environment and walks calm and quiet to begin with, introducing new places and new people slowly.

After your dog has had some time to get used to you and his new home, it would be really valuable for you to attend some reward-based training classes, such as those at your nearest Dogs Trust Dog School.

This will help you to create a really strong bond with your dog while teaching him important behaviours, such as leaving items when asked, and recall.



Make sure your dog has a comfy bed in his own space.



Looking for kind, fair and effective dog training?

The APDT will have a member who can help.....

www.apdt.co.uk

DOG Answers



Eating poo comes naturally to dogs.

HEALTH

Irresistible cat poo!

Q My three-year-old dog, Nelly, eats my cat's poo. Although I try to prevent this, I cannot always get there in time. My cat loves hunting wildlife. Can my dog catch anything from eating the poo?

Debbie Knowles, Essex.



Vicky says: Eating poo is a natural behaviour for dogs, but one which is not very hygienic. Parasites are the biggest concern for a dog who eats the faeces of other animals. By ensuring both your pets are regularly wormed, this risk is minimised. Other bacterial infections, such as *e. coli*, salmonella, giardia, and campylobacter may also be passed on

through eating both wildlife and faeces.

You can reduce access to cat faeces by placing litter trays where your dog can't reach them (perhaps on the other side of a baby gate), but you can also work on games that encourage self-control around food. Supplements are available that you can feed to your cat to make the faeces less attractive to your dog. My clients have tried these with varying success.

TRAINING

An inside story!

Q What indoor games can I play with my dog during bad weather to keep him entertained and engaged? Have you any suggestions or recommendations?

Tony Brace, Lancashire.



Kate says: You'll be pleased to know there are lots of different activities and games you can play with your dog to provide him with extra mental stimulation and further enrich his life.

Reward-based trick training can be a great way to work your dog's brain, while helping to build an even stronger bond between you. This could include anything you and your dog enjoy learning, such as walking through your legs, turning in a circle, picking things up and bringing them to you, and so on. The Dogs Trust Dog School has a useful video about reward-based dog training that can help get you off to a good start.

Providing lots of food games instead of, or as well as, feeding your dog from a bowl can be an easy and fun way to entertain him. There are lots of great food toys and puzzle feeders available to buy, or you can get creative and make your own out of general household recyclables (make sure these are safe though, for instance check things like newspapers for

staples and remove anything that could be swallowed such as bottle caps).

Think kibble in empty plastic bottles or egg cartons, or even hidden in scrunched up newspaper inside cardboard boxes. It's a good idea to supervise your dog with these items to ensure he is using them safely, and that you are there to help if he struggles to get the food out.

Scattering food or laying a trail in one area of the house or garden, and encouraging your dog to search for it, will tap into his amazing sense of smell and is always fun to watch; the more your dog practises this, the better he will get so the harder you can start to make the searches!

You can also buy or make a range of new toys and bring them out on different occasions to provide something new for your dog to engage with, rotating them on a regular basis to make sure they stay interesting. Dogs naturally like to manipulate objects with their mouths and paws, so trying a range of toys of different sizes, shapes, and textures will help



Introduce your dog to some interactive toys.

you find your dog's favourites.

Always ensure play sessions are safe; if you feel teeth on your skin/clothes at any point then end the game right away by staying calm, quiet, and moving away. Telling your dog off will only confuse him, as he might think he's being told off for playing and not want to join in again. After a short break, come back and play again — he'll soon learn that the fun can continue as long as he keeps his mouth on the toy! It's also OK to let your dog win sometimes, as making sure you both win will create a balanced play session.

If your dog enjoys interacting with people, then you could try playing hide-and-seek; you just need someone else to play with, someone who you can send to hide while you stay with your dog. Let your dog watch them go and then, once they've hidden, get them to shout: 'Ready' so your dog can hear roughly whereabouts they are, and release him to go and find the person. You can build it up and make it harder once your dog knows the game, by having your hider remain silent! Whenever your dog finds the hider, he gets a treat, a game with a toy, or a gentle fuss.



GROOMING

Nail it!

Q My partner and I are collecting a Labrador puppy in the near future. I am aware that we will need to adopt a grooming routine and I would like to be able to trim her nails myself. How old should she be before I do this for the first time? And how often will I have to cut her nails?

Maddy Wilson, Leicestershire.



Joanne says: A puppy's nails may require cutting more often than an adult's as they do not get the same exercise, which helps to wear the nails down naturally. You can start to trim the nails at any age depending on the nail length. Usually a puppy's nail will have a little, sharp hook that just needs nipping off. Check that the breeder hasn't done this already before you attempt to do it.

It is extremely difficult to say how often an individual dog's nails should be cut as it is dependent on how often they are walked, the surfaces they are walked on, the conformation of the foot, and the dog's age, size, and weight. If you walk your dog on hard surfaces, then the nails should wear down naturally and have a smoother edge. If you walk on softer ground, then they may not wear down as much. If they are not overlong, try filing the nails to remove any rough edges; a harsh emery board will suffice. Hold your dog's foot firmly, depress each toe individually, and file the edge gently.

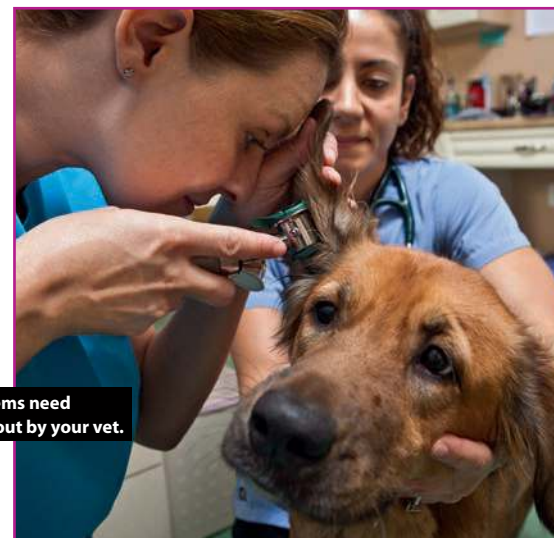
HEALTH

More than meets the eye

Q About a year ago, my dog, Barney, had a bad ear infection. It cleared up after a course of ear drops, but it seems to come back again every couple of months; it had never happened before last year. The drops clear it up, but I'm worried that there's an underlying issue, which is why it keeps coming back. Do you think it should be investigated further?

Graham Fisher, Essex.

Ear problems need checking out by your vet.



Vicky says: I definitely think Barney's ear problems need more investigation. Ear problems are often a symptom of allergic skin disease so, as well as taking swabs from Barney's ears to check for resistant bacterial infections, your vet might recommend an exclusion diet for 8 – 12 weeks, and tests or medication trials for skin allergies. If no underlying cause is found, then ask about a suitable cleaning regime to make Barney's ears a less hospitable place for bacteria to grow.

HEALTH

Soothing skin solutions

Q My six-year-old Labrador, Arthur, gets extremely dry skin, starting in October, right through to January. This causes him to itch his skin a lot, which makes it very red and sore. Are there any herbal remedies that would reduce the soreness?

Natalie Trimmer, Lincolnshire.



Holly says: Sometimes the balance of fats in the diet can lead to the coat becoming scurfy and the skin dry, so check that the diet you give your dog is high quality and contains natural ingredients. You can also help to alleviate dryness and itching by adding a balanced omega 3 and 6 supplement to your dog's food, such as flaxseed oil, or a pure omega 3 oil, such as a fish oil. However, there are also many proprietary oils available for dogs, such as Lintbells Yumega oils, and these can be very helpful too. YuDERM, which contains fish oils, flax, and vitamin E, is especially formulated to help itchy dogs.

Finally, make sure that you have treated your dog for fleas regularly as these annoying creatures can make a comeback when you begin to turn the central heating on through the winter months.



Quick-fire questions

WHAT IS CANI-CROSS?

Put simply, it is cross-country running with your dog. Both dog and owner wear harnesses, which are attached by a two-metre bungee lead. The dog runs ahead of the owner, which increases running speed.

It's a great way for dogs and owners to keep fit and enjoy the great outdoors. The use of directional commands ensures the dog uses his brain and listens to his owner.

Most dogs and owners can take part in cani-cross as long as they are reasonably fit and in good health, although some breeds are better suited to it than others. Dogs taking part should be 12 months old or over.

HOW DO YOU PREVENT YOUR DOG FROM GETTING FLEAS?

Prevention is better than cure and there are several things you can do. Exercising good hygiene in your home is vital, including frequently vacuuming soft furnishings, cracks in the floor, and skirting boards where fleas can hide. It's also important to wash your pet's bedding in warm water regularly, including any blankets that he likes to sleep on in the house or car. Monthly treatments will protect pets from catching fleas and you can also treat your home. Speak to your vet about the best products to use.

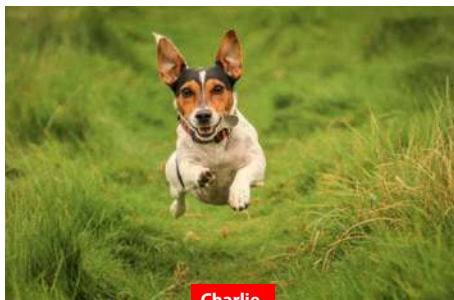
The Gallery

Give your dog his five minutes of fame.

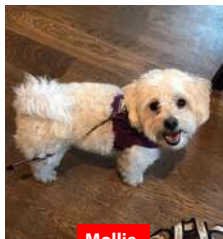


To be included in our gallery, email your photos to gallery@yourdog.co.uk or post traditional prints to the address on page 3. Include your name, address, and daytime telephone number, plus your dog's name and breed.

Alternatively, you can share your images on social media at www.facebook.com/yourdogmagazine Twitter @yourdog. Please, no images of dogs playing with sticks or wearing extreme clothing!



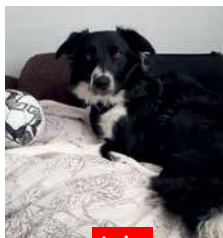
Charlie.



Mollie.



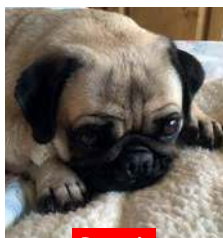
Jack.



Indy.



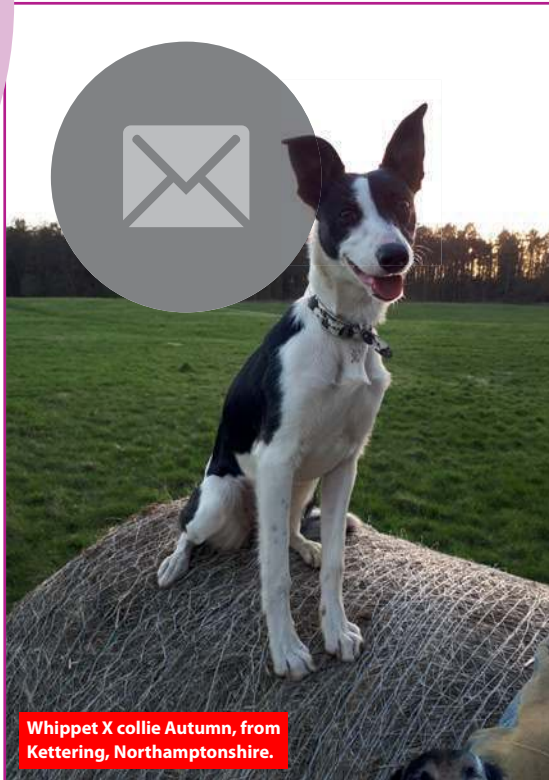
Rhoda.



Pugwai.



Elf.



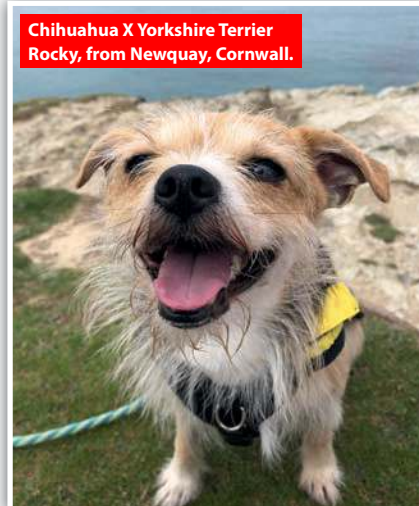
Whippet X collie Autumn, from Kettering, Northamptonshire.



Flat Coated Retrievers Carrie and Harvey, from Ellingham, Northumberland.



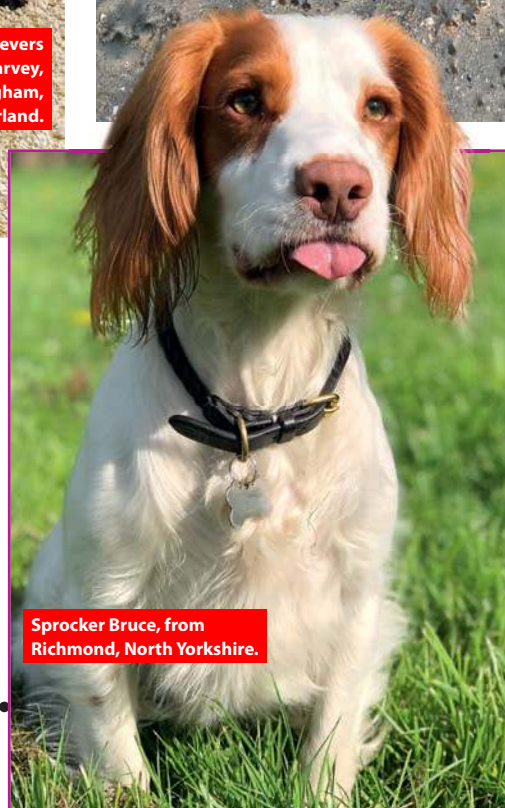
Cocker Spaniel Eddie, from Croydon, London.



Chihuahua X Yorkshire Terrier Rocky, from Newquay, Cornwall.



Labrador Retriever Florence, from Norwich, Norfolk.



Sprocker Bruce, from Richmond, North Yorkshire.

SPONSORED BY



**TOP
DOGS!**



Cocker Spaniel Gabie, and Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Ella, from York.



Miniature Schnauzer Nergal, from Midhurst, West Sussex.



Rottweiler Rory, from Pudsey, West Yorkshire.



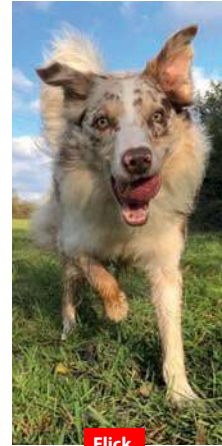
German Shepherd Maddie, from Truro, Cornwall.



Labradoodle Reginald, from Corby, Northamptonshire.



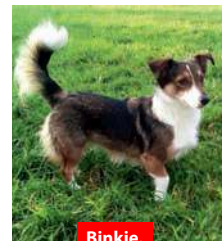
Collie-cross Darcy and Beagle Lola, from Hampton Lucy, Warwickshire.



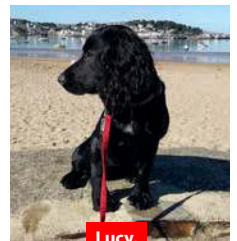
Flick.



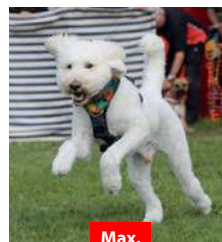
Kedzzie.



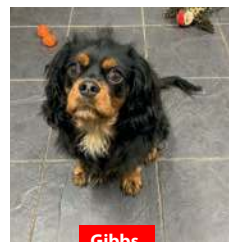
Binkie.



Lucy.



Max.



Gibbs.

Have you got a top dog?

Each month our 'Top Dog' receives a variety pack of three 2kg bags of lamb, chicken, and salmon dog food from The Natural Dog Food Company's Original range.

The Natural Dog Food Company produces home-cooked recipes in a convenient kibble form, combining a unique range of vegetables, herbs, and fruits, with a large proportion of fresh, human-grade meat, without any artificial supplementation whatsoever.

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WITH
YOUR DOG

HAVE FUN
WITH
YOUR DOG



Six pages of
Your Dog
Membership
info and
offers.



Your Dog subscribers can now benefit from special offers and discounts throughout the year from UK dog-friendly pubs, restaurants, cafes, retailers, groomers, hotels, cottages, camping sites, and B&Bs!

Our dogs are a much-loved part of the family — and it's this that has been the driving force behind our new membership. We have over 250 exclusive discounts and perks on offer to anyone with an active Your Dog Membership, and we've made it as simple as possible to take part and enjoy the benefits!

You can check out the latest offers either online (www.yourdog.co.uk/card), in our email newsletter (go to the website to sign up if you haven't already), or in this print issue of Your Dog Magazine. With some offers, you'll need to show your card on arrival; others are online only via a redemption code. For full details about each offer, visit the website.

We have some amazing partners on board, from outdoor clothing retailers to weekend dog-friendly breaks, pet shops to groomers, pubs and cafes to comedy tours and country houses! We'll continue to grow our offers, making Your Dog the number one stop for all dog-friendly discounts.

QUICK QUESTIONS

I'm already a subscriber; do I need to do anything?

As a subscriber, you are automatically a member and continue to enjoy Your Dog Magazine as well as all the extra benefits. Your card is included in this month's issue and ready to use. If you subscribe to the digital edition, unfortunately we are unable to facilitate the membership to digital magazine subscribers at this stage.

How do I access the offers?

To view all offers, visit www.yourdog.co.uk/card and log into your account. Here it will also tell you how to redeem each offer. Check you're also receiving our e-newsletters as these will let you know about the latest offers too. If you can't remember your log in details, there are instructions to help guide you through the process. If you're struggling to log in,



**HOLIDAY
WITH
YOUR DOG**



**your
dog**
MEMBERSHIP
CARD

HOW TO JOIN

There are two ways to join Your Dog Membership:

1 As a Your Dog Magazine subscriber, you'll receive all 12 issues of the magazine (one every month), plus access to all our offers.

2 Or, you can take membership only. With this you'll get four issues of the magazine

(these quarterly 'membership special' issues of Your Dog will detail any new offers and news about the membership), plus the membership benefits. Visit www.yourdog.co.uk/card for more details.

FULL SUBSCRIPTION

12 issues a year
(one every month)

£40 A YEAR

www.yourdog.co.uk/subscribe

MEMBERSHIP ONLY

4 issues a year
(one a quarter)

£23 A YEAR

www.yourdog.co.uk/membership

With either option, you'll get...

- Membership card and travel pack (while stocks last).
- Discounts at 100s of dog-friendly pubs, restaurants, eateries, attractions, and on days out.
- Four special membership issues of Your Dog Magazine delivered to your door.
- Shopping discounts at various shows.
- The Your Dog Membership e-newsletter with the latest offers and savings.

please contact YourDogMembership@warnersgroup.co.uk and we'll be happy to help.

Can I buy the membership as a gift?

Yes, the membership is perfect for any dog lover! If you know someone who loves a holiday, a day out, or even a lunch with their dog by their side, a membership gift is ideal. The membership is just £23 a year (this includes four issues of Your Dog).

**DON'T MISS OUT ON
OUR SHOW OFFERS!**

ARE YOU GOING TO CRUFTS?

All subscribers have received both the new membership card and a booklet of shopping offers available at Crufts. Save money with Vetbed, Dragon Leads, Burgess, Dorwest, and many more. Make sure you take the Crufts pocket offers booklet, plus the Your Dog Membership card with you to Crufts.

Use the voucher in the booklet and visit the Your Dog stand (Hall 4, Stand 32) for a free goody bag!

**FOR THE LATEST OFFERS AND DISCOUNTS
VISIT WWW.YOURDOG.CO.UK/CARD**



**DINE OUT
WITH
YOUR DOG**

your dog

MEMBERSHIP
ACCOMMODATION

Dog-friendly places to stay

NORTH

Laverock Multidog Holiday Cottages, County Durham.

Offer: 30 minutes free use of indoor dog agility arena.

George & Dragon, Cumbria.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Greenhowe Caravan Park, Cumbria.

Offer: 10% off.

THE LINDUM HOTEL (LANCASHIRE)

Situated on the seafront in the traditional seaside resort of Lytham St Annes, the hotel is the perfect place to relax and enjoy a break. Take in the stunning sea views and sample delicious fish and chips, home-cooked bar snacks, afternoon tea, or a tipple of your choice.



OFFER: 10% OFF ON BAR SNACKS AND DRINKS PURCHASED DURING YOUR STAY. DOGS STAY FREE (USUALLY £5 PER DOG PER NIGHT).

BANYERS HOUSE (HERTFORDSHIRE)

No two bedrooms are alike at Banyers House. Each air-conditioned guest room blends the character of antique beams, exposed brickwork, and wood panelling, with the modern luxury and comfort you'd expect from an Oakman Inn.



OFFER: 10% OFF AND DOGS STAY FREE (USUALLY £20).

Keswick Cottages, Cumbria.

Offer: Complimentary dog treats.

Sun Inn, Cumbria.

Offer: 10% off midweek break of two or more nights.

Coquet Cottages, Northumberland.

Offer: Free Kong toy with any booking.

Counting Sheep Campers, Northumberland.

Offer: 10% off caravan/motorhome hire.

Helme Pasture Lodges & Cottages, Yorkshire.

Offer: 10% off.

MIDLANDS & EAST ANGLIA

Bolehill Farm Cottages, Derbyshire.

Offer: 5% off.

The White Hart, Bedfordshire.

Offer: 10% off; dogs stay free (usually £20).

The Kings Arms, Hertfordshire.

Offer: 10% off; dogs stay free (usually £20).

The Penny Farthing, Hertfordshire.

Offer: 10% off; dogs stay free (usually £20).

Asphodel Cottage, Gloucestershire.

Offer: Up to three dogs stay free (usually £30 each).

East Ruston Cottages, Norfolk.

Offer: 5% off a booking, a deposit of just £100, plus 2 x £10 vouchers.

Little Stables, Norfolk.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Oak Tree Cottages, Norfolk.

Offer: 10% off.

The Crown & Thistle, Oxfordshire.

Offer: 10% off; dogs stay free (usually £20).

The Blue Boar, Oxfordshire.

Offer: 10% off accommodation; dogs stay free (usually £20).

Barking Mad Weekends, Craven Arms, Shropshire.

Offer: 10% off.

Greenway Touring & Glamping Park, Shropshire.

Offer: 10% off.

Kelsale Holidays, Suffolk.

Offer: 10% off; dogs stay free.

Woodfarm Barns and Barges, Suffolk.

Offer: 10% off plus free dog hamper.

The Globe, Warwickshire.

Offer: 10% off, plus dogs stay free (usually £20).

Colwall Park Hotel, Worcestershire.

Offer: Dogs stay free (usually £10 per dog).

KENWOOD HALL HOTEL & SPA (SOUTH YORKSHIRE)

A 4-star hotel and spa, just one mile from Sheffield city centre. The hotel combines a convenient location and idyllic country setting with 12 acres of beautiful parkland providing a perfect setting for walkies and exploring, 30 pet-friendly rooms, along with the lounge bar and patio area, meaning you can all dine together.



OFFER: 10% OFF FOOD AND BEVERAGES, PLUS BOOK A ROOM AND DOGS STAY FREE! (MAXIMUM TWO DOGS PER ROOM).

Ts&Cs — every effort has been made to ensure all offers are correct. We cannot accept any liability for errors or limited stock issues. Please check before purchasing that the offer is valid and, where applicable, there is stock available.

THE ROSEATE VILLA (BATH)

A luxury dog-friendly boutique hotel that occupies a quiet corner close to the heart of the city of Bath. The Villa overlooks Henrietta Park, a seven-acre oasis of tranquillity, which was opened in 1897 to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. The park offers many places to sit quietly, or take a relaxing stroll.



OFFER: 12% OFF AND DOGS STAY FREE (USUALLY £15).

SOUTH EAST

The Royal Fosterers, Berkshire.

Offer: 10% off; dogs stay free (usually £20).

Malmaison, Brighton.

Offer: 20% off food and beverages; dogs stay free (one per room).

Oriental Boutique Hotel, Brighton.

Offer: 10% off.

Let's Unwind Rock Lobster, East Sussex.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Let's Unwind Salty Dog, East Sussex.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Wycliffe Guest House, Kent.

Offer: Dogs stay free (usually £6 per dog per night).

SOUTH WEST

Boturnell Farm, Cornwall.

Offer: Dog welcome pack.

Harrods Cornish Cottages (The Forge), Cornwall.

Offer: 10% off.

Harrods Cornish Cottages (Wishing Well Cottage), Cornwall.

Offer: 10% off.

Mineshop Holiday Cottages, Cornwall.

Offer: One dog stays free.

Mullion Cove Hotel & Spa, Cornwall.

Offer: Dogs stay free all year (charge usually incurred other than Jan/Feb), free dog towel gift.

Trevornick Holiday Park, Cornwall.

Offer: Dogs stay free (usually £5 per dog).

Bolberry Farm, Devon.

Offer: four nights for the price of three on a midweek break.



A genuinely pet-friendly Scottish country house hotel in the heart of Dumfries & Galloway



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www.trigonyhotel.co.uk



Buckland Tout Saints, Devon.

Offer: Cream tea on arrival, plus welcome pack.

Campbell's B&B, Devon.

Offer: 10% off first night's accommodation.

Dittiscombe Holiday Cottages, Devon.

Offer: 10% off on weekly bookings.

Fairwater Head Hotel, Devon.

Offer: Dogs stay free (usually £14 per dog).

Kitley House Hotel, Devon.

Offer: 10% off.

Northcote Manor Farm, Devon.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Salty Monk, Devon.

Offer: Cream tea upon arrival and gift for dog.

Saunton Beach Villas, Devon.

Offer: Dogs stay free (usually £40 per dog).

Thatched Cottage Hotel, Hampshire.

Offer: Dogs stay free (usually £10 per dog).

Cottage Lodge Hotel, Hampshire.

Offer: Dogs stay free (usually £10 per dog per night).

Primrose Hill Holidays, Somerset.

Offer: Up to two dogs stay free.

Woodcombe Lodges, Somerset.

Offer: Dogs stay half price (usually £20).

SCOTLAND

Cairngorm Lodges, Aberdeenshire.

Offer: Dogs stay free (max two).

George & Abbotsford Hotel, Melrose, Borders.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Oaklands Guesthouse, Montrose, Borders.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Red Lion, Earlstoun, Borders.

Offer: 10% off.

Atholl Cottage, Perthshire.

Offer: Dogs stay free (max two).

Auchterlyth Steadings, Perthshire.

Offer: 10% off.

Four Seasons Hotel, Perthshire.

Offer: Seven nights for the price of five in chalet on B&B basis.

Old Kirk, Dalguise, Perthshire.

Offer: £50 off booking.

Chapel Outon, Wigtownshire.

Offer: Afternoon tea on arrival.

WALES

Bodfan, Anglesey.

Offer: 10% off.

Cefn-Du Holiday Cottages, Pembrokeshire.

Offer: 10% off.

Cawtch Farm B&B, Swansea.

Offer: Dogs stay free.

Craig Y Nos, Swansea.

Offer: 20% off an evening meal.

BRYNYGWIN COUNTRY HOUSE AND COTTAGES (GWYNEDD)

Safely within the Snowdonia National Park, Brynwgwin is ideal for a holiday away from modernity, rush, and noise. Owners can park their cars alongside their accommodation; children and dogs can be safe in the enclosed cottage gardens, or free in the wider grounds. Walkers can set out in any direction they like with one of the many handy guidesheets provided.



OFFER: DOGS STAY FREE.

your dog

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More great offers and discounts

PUBS, CAFES, AND RESTAURANTS

Isle of Wight: Blueberrys Cafe, Littlestairs.

Offer: 10% off.

County Durham: Doggie Diner, Durham.

Offer: 10% off total bill.

Lincolnshire: Royal William IV, Lincoln.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Nottinghamshire: The Admiral Rodney, Southwell.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Somerset: The Boater, Bath.

Offer: Free dog treats.

Nottinghamshire: The Castle Pub, Nottingham.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Derbyshire: The Chequers Inn, Stanton by Dale.

Offer: 20% off food, and drinks with meals.

Lincolnshire: The Duke William, Lincoln.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Lincolnshire: The Ferry Boat, Washingborough.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Leicestershire: The Globe, Leicester.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Lincolnshire: The Horse & Groom, Lincoln.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Leicestershire: The Marquis Wellington, Leicester.

Offer: 10% off food and drink orders.

Kent: The Pearson's Arms, Whitstable.

Offer: 10% off selected drinks.

Hertfordshire: The Sunflower Tea Room, Buntingford.

Offer: 10% discount.

Northumberland: Twice Brewed Inn, Hexham.

Offer: 5% off all purchases.

HAVEN HOLIDAYS

Who says holidays are just for humans? At Haven, they believe your dog should enjoy the experience just as much as you do.

Haven has 33 dog-friendly parks at locations across the country, from Scotland and Northumberland to Devon and Cornwall, offering standard, deluxe, and prestige caravan holidays. Standard chalets and apartments are also available at some parks.



OFFER: UP TO £30 OFF YOUR HAVEN HOLIDAY.

DOG-FRIENDLY ATTRACTIONS

Cumbria: Brantwood (the final home of the writer, artist, and social reformer John Ruskin), Coniston.

Offer: Free dog treats and map of dog-friendly walks.

Derbyshire: Heights of Abraham (hill-top park reached by cable car), Matlock.

Offer: 10% off admission.

Devon: Lynmouth & Lynton Funicular Cliff Railway, Lynmouth.

Offer: Free dog biscuits.

Gloucestershire: Birdland & Jurassic Journey, Bourton-on-the-Water.

Offer: 10% off price at gate.

Northumberland: Bamburgh Castle, Bamburgh.

Offer: 10% off admission.

Oxfordshire: Broughton Castle, Banbury.

Offer: £1 off admission.

Shropshire: Hawkstone Park Follies (100 acres of stunning scenery filled with magical follies), Shrewsbury.

Offer: 10% off.

Somerset: Cheddar Gorge, Bath.

Offer: £2 ticket discount per person on the gate (parties of six).

South Yorkshire: Whirlowbrook Hall (conference and wedding venue), Sheffield.

Offer: Free dog wedding cake for couples who book a wedding.

DOG GROOMERS AND PET STORES

Bedfordshire: Benji & Beau, Shefford.

Offer: 20% off online.

Cornwall: Paws in Padstow, Padstow.

Offer: 10% off first online order.

Cornwall: Rocky's Pet Care (pet shop and grooming lounge), St Ives.

Offer: 10% off boutique ware and grooming.

WIGWAM HOLIDAYS

With dog-friendly sites across Britain, owners and dogs will love a Wigwam holiday. The comfortable, warm cabins are set in stunning scenery, where owners can enjoy the peace and quiet, as well as fantastic dog walks right on their doorstep. Wigwam site owners are on hand to advise about dog-friendly pubs, attractions, beaches, and walks. From adventure seekers to those looking for a peaceful retreat, a Wigwam break is a novel and authentic way to experience the great outdoors with your dog.



OFFER: 15% OFF YOUR WIGWAM HOLIDAY.

ANGLO WELSH WATERWAY HOLIDAYS

Canal boat holidays are great for dog owners, with plenty of towpath walks and many dog-friendly canal-side pubs. The freedom of a canal boat holiday sees your boat become your floating hotel, giving you the chance to stay where you choose — from vibrant city centres to remote backwaters. The boats also have all the home comforts needed for dogs and owners alike.



OFFER: TWO DOGS GO FREE OF CHARGE.

County Durham: Ingleby Dog Grooming, Allensway, Stockton-on-Tees.

Offer: 10% off dog groom and free hydro spa treatment.

County Durham: Ingleby Pet Supplies, Allensway, Stockton-on-Tees.

Offer: 10% off in store.

Cumbria: Keswick Groomers, Braithwaite Farm.

Offer: 10% off.

East Sussex: Bone Idol Brighton, Brighton.

Offer: 10% off in store and online.

Greater Manchester: The Pet Friends, Hyde.

Offer: 5% off online.

Hampshire: The Love of Dogz, Kings Worthy.

Offer: 10% off online.

Kent: Dakota's Pawfection, Minster On Sea, Isle of Sheppey.

Offer: 25% off first dog wash/groom.

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Kent: Lucky Paws, Paddock Wood.

Offer: 10% off grooming services.

Kent: Pure Connection Pets, Tenterden.

Offer: 10% off in store.

All Pet Solutions Ltd.

Offer: 10% off online.

Staffordshire: Newcastle Pet Supplies, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Offer: 15% off online and in store.

Suffolk: Philly's Dog Grooming, Ipswich.

Offer: 10% off first groom.

Lecker Bites Dog Food.

Offer: 15% off online.

Petsbits.co.uk

Offer: 10% off single product online.

ProGroom.

Offer: 10% off online.

OTHER GREAT OFFERS!

Bedfordshire: Bridget Davey Photography, Leighton Buzzard.

Offer: 20% off photoshoot.

East Sussex: Sporty Dogs Physio.

Offer: 10% off first three treatments of canine Bowen therapy.

Hertfordshire: Imago Portraits, Potters Bar.

Offer: Pay £10 and get £250 gift certificate.

Lancashire: Walkies Blackpool (walking service and kennels), Thornton Cleveleys.

Offer: 10% off first booking, plus complimentary first visit.

Leicestershire: K9 Campus Doggy Day Care, Ashby Road.

Offer: Book 10-day care session and get £10 voucher to spend online.

London: You and the Dog Photography, Kennington.

Offer: 15% off.

Bone Idol Originals Ltd.

Offer: Free postage for orders under £200 (usually £7 charge).

Dream Paws Shop.

Offer: 10% off online.

Hawkshead.

Offer: 25% off online.

Lunar Photography.

Offer: £25 off online.

Minerva Creations.

Offer: £40 for commission, plus other services online.

Motif.

Offer: 20% off online.

Plexidor Pet Doors

(Pet Products UK).

Offer: 10% off online.

Anna Pateman Pet Portraits.

Offer: 15% off online.

Ruffwear.

Offer: 10% off online.

SGW Portraits.

Offer: £5 off, plus free first class postage online.

Vetbed.

Offer: 25% off online.

WufWuf Subscription Boxes.

Offer: £5 off first subscription box online.

Cotswold Outdoor Company.

Offer: 10% off in store and online.

Pawly Pets (first aid kits).

Offer: 10% off online.

Paws in the Park Show.

Offer: 20% off when booking tickets online.

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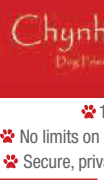


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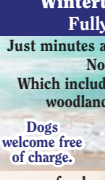
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LAST WORD WITH... *Scott Miller*

ABOUT SCOTT
Dr Scott Miller was born in Brisbane, Australia, studied at the University of Queensland Veterinary School, and eventually settled in London where he runs three veterinary practices. He began working regularly in the media, becoming the vet on ITV's 'This Morning' and hosting his own programme 'Vet on the Hill'. Recently, he's been filming and providing emergency vet care to help the wildlife in Australia, following the devastating bushfires.

The TV vet on how, and why, dogs make the best friends ever.

Q Tell us about your first dog.

"My first dog was a Bull Terrier called Zed. I was about 23 years old. Zed was the sweetest and most gentle dog in the world. I got him as a rescue from the RSPCA and I fell in love with him immediately. He was also a canine blood donor so he did his bit. He was big and menacing looking, but he was the happiest, softest thing ever. Sadly, he died at just seven years of age, but, as my first fur baby, he will always have a place in my heart."



Scott with his family.

dog and be honest about their day-to-day circumstances. Dogs need companionship, mental stimulation, veterinary treatment, and, of course, exercise in varying amounts, and you need to know all of that before you bring a new fluffball home. But get it right and in return you'll have the best friend ever."

Q Tell us a funny story about one of your dogs.

"It has to be Betty and her matchmaking skills. I brought her into 'This Morning's' offices many years ago and she ran under a desk

and then licked one of the producer's legs. That lady turned out to be my wife's best friend, who brazenly asked if I was single and then set us up on a blind date... the rest is history."

Q Tell us about your current dogs.

"Our house is wonderful chaos. With four children and two dogs, there is never a quiet moment! There's Betty, a 13-year-old Border Terrier, who we've had since she was a puppy. She's struggling a bit in her old age with spinal issues and toileting, but is utterly adorable in every way. We've also got Skully, a Poodle-cross who's three years old; a massive part of the family and into all sorts of mischief!"

Q If you were a dog, which breed would you be?

"Being a blond-haired Aussie, who loves the great outdoors and the water, I'd have to be a Golden Retriever!"

Q What do you enjoy most about being a dog owner?

"I live in a house with four children, so my dogs give me an excuse to head out into the park or woods to get a bit of quiet time! Work is busy with the vet practices and TV filming so my beloved dogs give me that chance to escape, enjoy some bonding time, and switch off for a little each day."

Q Dog(s) allowed in/on the bed: yes or no?

"Me: no; my wife, Zoe: yes — which sometimes makes things a bit tricky!"

Q Where is your favourite place for a perfect dog-friendly holiday?

"As a family, we love piling everything into the car, escaping the city, and heading to the beach. Bournemouth has some great dog-friendly beaches, the kids love it, and swimming helps with Betty's spinal injury."

Q In your opinion, what are the biggest issues facing dog owners today?

"The rise in pet theft is incredibly concerning."

Q Where did your love of dogs begin?

"From about the age of five, back home in Australia when our neighbours' dog, called Ziggy, used to escape, burrowing under the fence to come and play. I think I fell in love with his cheeky and naughty side."

Q Name a dog-related product you couldn't live without.

"As Betty is a little incontinent now, the dog nappies she wears are a godsend!"



Scott with dogs Betty and Skully, and other assorted pets.

● You can catch up with Scott at Dogstival, the canine extravaganza taking place at Pylewell Park in the New Forest on May 16 and 17, where he'll be hosting the Healthy Hound Den; www.dogstival.co.uk



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