



Bulletin No. 103 January 2022

Dear Members, Volunteers, Therapets and Friends

Welcome 2022 and hopefully it will be a better year for everyone!

The demand for our services is steadily picking up and several organisations have been contacting us asking for visits, including companies requesting Therapets for staff health and wellbeing events. We have been developing interest with organisations in the Highlands in Inverness and as far as Caithness, as well as in Oban, Argyll. Since resuming Therapet Assessments in August 2021, we have registered 80 new members which shows us that there is still a lot of interest in volunteering! A potential issue with that is we may have a slightly longer wait to arrange a placement in some areas due to ongoing visiting restrictions. However, some volunteers are not yet able to return to visiting so there may also be some vacancies to fill. Most NHS sites are still off limits. Care homes have varying requirements for entry, and some colleges/universities are studying from home while others are back on site and have run some 'Paws Against Stress' sessions. Schools are extremely keen to have us in as there are many more mental health, emotional and learning issues than pre-pandemic. We are anticipating that the warmer weather in spring will see further requests and some volunteers may wish to return at that point and provide outdoor visits. Please do keep in touch with your Area Representative or our office so we can maintain updated lists of requests and active volunteers.

We will be running another webinar during the first week of March. This will be aimed at new volunteers but is open to anyone who has any questions about visiting. Our webinar Q&A in September was well attended. We will also be running more informative talks this year, again online, as this proved to be an easy way to reach a large number of people and we have had some wonderful guest speakers and contributions from our volunteers. We have recorded previous talks where appropriate and made them available to those interested.

We are always looking for articles for our newsletter or social media sites so please do contact us if you have anything to share - it makes the newsletter so much more interesting hearing about what is going on around the country!

Our work in the office has been chaotic this month as Norma's computer hard drive failed and we had to upgrade to a new machine as this one had been purchased in 2014. Our landlord then replaced the office windows, so we had to close for two days to facilitate this. Meanwhile, sisters Norma and Carole took on a nine-week-old puppy who is the pup of a dog that Norma used to handle as a Therapet. It is all a new experience for them as they have only ever owned cats before! Lots of toilet training and interrupted nights ahead but hopefully, in the future, young Preston (pictured below) will be Therapet material like his mum!

As always, we are here to answer any questions that you may have and support you in your volunteer experience, so please do not hesitate to contact us. Our office phones (0131 553 0034) are on from 10am - 4pm Mon-Fri with an answer phone outside of this time.



Take care everyone

Mel Hughes, CEO

News from the Trustee Directors

The Board met in September 2021 but since then, several of the committees have met to work on various aspects. The Therapet Committee is monitoring the impact of the pandemic on Therapet Visits. The Finance & Fundraising Committee have been monitoring our income and expenditure and have been pleased with the success of our fundraising efforts throughout the pandemic. The Animal Health, Education & Legislation Committee has been keeping up to date with government legislation and the impact the pandemic has been having on our Therapets.

In September, Trustee Director and Area Representative for Glasgow & Strathclyde, James Macdonald, attended the Scottish Kennel Club show in Edinburgh. He was supported by volunteers John Kerr with Therapet JJ, Allison Aspinall with Therapet Pepper, the Cocker Spaniel, and Marion Reddie. We are looking forward to more events resuming this year.



Therapet JJ



Therapet Pepper

James has been busy as he also did a presentation for the Society of Companion Animal Studies at their Conference in September, where he highlighted the impact our Therapet visits have had on the elderly in care homes, hospices, and other settings.

THE 2021 SCAS VIRTUAL CONFERENCE
Animal-Assisted Interventions: Research meets Practice
 19th September 2021



Therapet® visiting with the Elderly

James Macdonald
(Therapet®)

BOOK ONLINE AT WWW.SCAS.ORG.UK

Membership Renewal 2022

Following January's bulletin, the membership renewals will be sent out via email or by post to those who requested postal copies. If you are a new member and have paid membership fees between 1st October and 31st December 2021, you will not need to pay membership fees until 2023.

Membership fees are deliberately kept low to encourage members to support us. We recognise that there are many increasing costs this coming year in other areas of our lives so there is no change to the pricing. Our fees help to cover our administration costs of running the office.

The 2022 Annual Membership fees are:

Single	£10	Under 16	£5
Joint	£15	Joint Senior Citizen	£10
Senior Citizen	£5	Corporate*	£20

The Therapet Registration fee is a one-off payment of £5 that is only payable when a new Therapet is initially registered. Anyone can support CCST by becoming a supporting member, but, for insurance purposes, Therapet

Volunteers must retain their membership if planning to resume visiting once we are able.

**The Corporate membership is for organisations e.g., dog clubs/trainers, grooming parlours, or vet practices, that are interested in our work and wish to support us, but they usually do not have active volunteers with us. Care Homes and other groups may also wish to take out a Corporate membership with us and we will send them a copy of the newsletter and updates, as well as share any social media posts regarding our visits to their organisation.*

Welcome New Therapets!

Welcome to all new Therapets and Volunteers and we hope you are able to start visiting soon. In Orkney, our volunteers were out before Christmas informing the public about our services and hopefully this will inspire some new volunteers there. Here are two of our latest Therapets who have started visiting at Viewpark Care home, Portobello, where they will visit on alternate weeks. Therapet Joey, a Border Collie will be accompanied by volunteer Karen Brown and Therapet Petra, a Miniature Schnauzer by Joan Campbell.



New volunteer, Peter Wilson, and Therapet Ruby the Miniature Labradoodle were eager to start visiting in the West Lothian area. An opportunity arose at a care home in Livingston and Ruby took to it as if she had plenty of experience. The activity coordinator was so happy with the response that he included their visit in a recent article to the West Lothian Courier and The Daily Record. Click on the link below to read on.

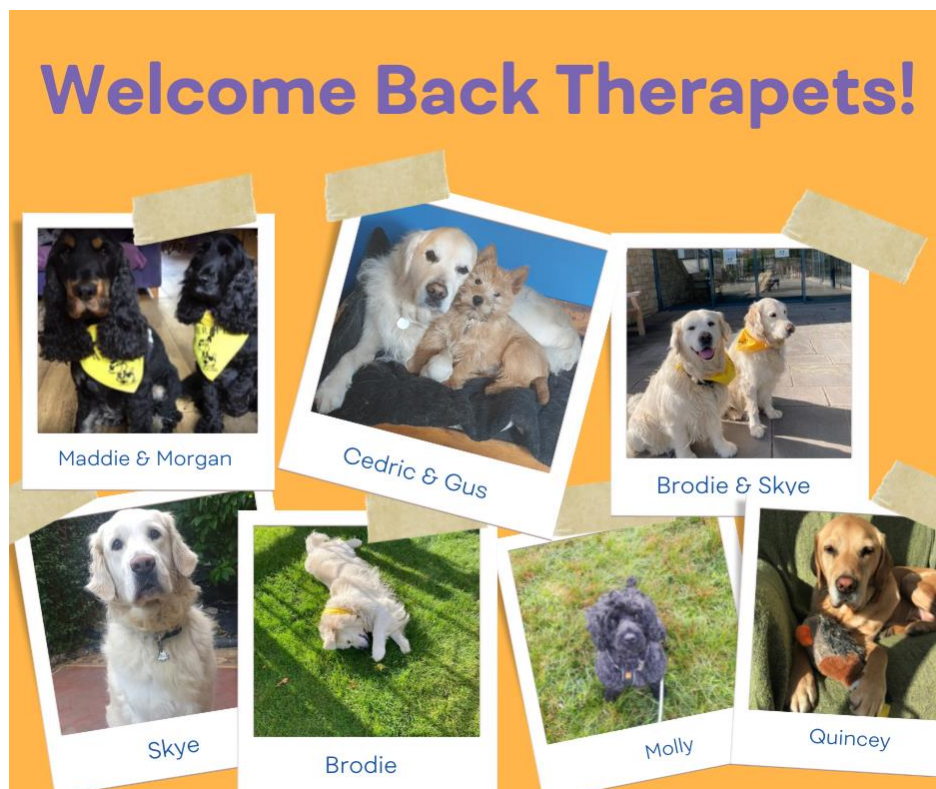


<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/nursing-home-residents-welcomed-very-25871000>

New Therapet Molly, the Cocker Spaniel, and volunteer Lianne Robertson started visiting St Modans Care Home in Fraserburgh. They will visit once a month to spend time with the residents and enjoy some head pats and affection. Molly is a wee gentle lass who loves nothing more than making new friends, a scratch behind the ears and a slither of carrot if it's going spare.



St Columba's Hospice



The staff and patients at St Columba's Hospice in Edinburgh were absolutely thrilled to welcome our Therapets back in October. From the looks of it, our Therapets were just as happy to be back! Well done to them for receiving a Hospice Care Award in December, which was nominated by the staff as a thanks for bringing cheery smiles and caring canines back to the Hospice.



'Paws Against Stress'

Therapet volunteers have attended events around the country for a variety of organisations since our services resumed in September. Shopping giant, IKEA, invited us in for wellbeing sessions for their staff at their Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Glasgow stores before Christmas and more are planned for 2022. In October, an event was held for the first time at the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration in Glasgow. Events were also held at universities including Aberdeen University Medical Society, Glasgow University, and the University of the Highlands & Islands. Upcoming events include Robert Gordon's University in Aberdeen, as well as Perth College UHI. We have returned to some other visits, including Edinburgh College, however, since Christmas some of this work was impacted with the Omicron restrictions. We are hoping to have more visits elsewhere later this year.

Paws @ Glasgow University

Therapets have been back providing 'Paws Against Stress' events at Glasgow University. They visited Glasgow University QMU in November and Glasgow University Students' Representative Council in December. They all worked well and had some fun with the students helping them to de-stress during this exam period.

Many thanks to our volunteers and Therapets at QMU, including Bella, Bailey, Harley, and India...and 'the elephant in the room'. Also, thanks to Lauren and her team from QMU for organising this event.



Many thanks to our volunteers and Therapets at SRUC including Meala, Alba, Milo, and Bailey. Also, thanks to "Sam" and his team from SRC for organising this event. There will be more in 2022.



Many thanks to volunteers who took their Therapets along the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration in October. Therapets included Bella, Twiggy, and Molly.



HMP Perth – A New Venture

Therapets Amber, (Boxer), Evie and Ola (Schipperke's) along with three volunteers, were our first official visitors to HMP Perth in November 2021, nearly two years since the initial planning started. The dogs took all the security measures in their stride and loved all of the fuss and attention.

The sessions are held weekly in the evening to support people with their mental health. Feedback from the first session included "Brilliant!" and "It's made my week - I feel so much better having seen the dogs". We have now had five Therapets in visiting. Thank you to everyone involved and if you are interested in this, please let us know.



Vaccination Centre Visits

Therapet Ralph, a Labrador Retriever, has been providing some much-needed calm at a vaccination centre in Aberdeen. Ralph is pictured with members of the British Army who have been providing support there.



School Visits

Therapet Tallie has been very active in the Glasgow region, with her visits including Langside Primary School, Shawlands Primary School and Barrhead High School to resume 'Reading With Dogs' sessions. She has also visited Beechwood Nursery in Easterhouse to talk to pupils about being safe around dogs and other pets.



A Therapet's Role

P4/5 pupils from St Cuthbert's Primary School in South Lanarkshire researched the role of Therapets and wrote exposition texts to persuade the reader about the benefits of having them in schools. They created illustrations to match their texts and used [@ChatterPixIt](#) to bring them to life. If you have access to Twitter, watch their video here

<https://twitter.com/stcuthbertsps/status/1465365187259781121>



In Memory of...

Every year we celebrate the lives of our animals who have given so much to us as family pets and to others as Therapets. Since our last newsletter, we have sadly said goodbye to the following Therapets:

Bailey, Bernese Mountain Dog, owned by George Brabender, Ayrshire

Bailey had been a Therapet for over four years and was a recipient of his three-year certificate. He was a very welcome visitor to the Erskine Veterans Home and a 'well-read to dog as a willing listener' in our 'Reading with Dogs' scheme. Bailey will be sorely missed by his volunteer partner George and all who knew and loved him.



Bella, Standard Poodle, owned by Gillian Rosen, Dundee

A Therapet for 3 years with the certificate to prove it, Bella was a welcome visitor to Harestane Care Home Dundee with volunteer and owner Gillian. Bella was a much-loved pet and is missed by all who knew and loved her - she has left many wonderful memories.

Bruno, German Shepherd, owned by Fiona and Peter Watts, Aberdeen

Bruno, a Therapet since 2014, with volunteer owner (and one of Aberdeen's three Area Representatives) Fiona Watts, was a well-loved Therapet visitor - with a 5 year medal to prove it! He volunteered in all aspects of our work and was particularly good with young children. He also enjoyed being part of the Canine Crew at Aberdeen Airport. Sadly, after becoming ill with spleen problems, Bruno died in October 2021. He was a wonderful pet and Therapet and will be sadly missed by Fiona and family, including his Therapet housemate, Leo.

Ellie, Cocker Spaniel, owned by Dorothee Venn, Aberdeen

Retired Therapet Ellie had been registered since 2018 and had received her well-earned three-year certificate. Ellie was a welcome visitor to Lewis Court Sheltered Complex & Taransay Court in Aberdeen. As well as Therapet volunteering, Ellie was also a successful agility dog! She will be sorely missed by owner Dorothee and all who knew and loved her.

Fenton, Cocker Spaniel, owned by Phyliss (Phyl) Kiff, Clackmannanshire

Therapet Fenton was registered in 2019 and was a welcome visitor to Clackmannan County Hospital with owner Phyl. Fenton sadly died after sudden and unexpected illness. He will be missed as a Therapet and as a much-loved family pet.

Isla, Working Cocker, owned by Andy Waugh, Midlothian

Retired in September 2021, Isla had been a registered Therapet since 2018, and being a welcome visitor to Pendreich Care Home in Lasswade was among her many duties. Isla had retired from Therapet duties in September 2021. She will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her, not forgetting Therapet housemates, her daughter and granddaughter, Tilly & Mara.

Kyla, Yorkshire Terrier, owned by Hilary Hodgkinson, Aberdeen

Kyla had been a Therapet since 2017 and was a deserved recipient of a three-year certificate. Kyla and volunteer owner Hilary were welcome visitors to Inverurie Day Care Centre. Kyla had retired from Therapet duties due to ill health. She will be much missed by all who knew and loved her.

Maisy, Cockapoo, owned by Fiona Tulley, Perthshire

Maisy had been a Therapet since 2019 and had been a welcome visitor to Catmoor House Care Home in Scone, and Viewlands Nursing Home, Perth. Sadly, taken too early when hit by a car, Maisy is so sadly missed by owner Fiona, but will always bring fond memories.

Miles, Jack Russell, owned by Wendy Crosby, Glasgow

Registered in 2019, sadly Miles never got to start visiting as a Therapet, so missed the opportunity to bring his own brand of therapy to those requiring his calm and attention loving presence. We're sure, like all of our Therapets, Miles would have been great. He is sorely missed.

Murphy, Labrador, owned by Heather Kay, Edinburgh

Murphy had been a Therapet since 2014 and had received his 5-year medal when he retired in March 2021 at the grand age of 14. Owner Heather advised us that sadly their 'dignified old Labrador' died just shy of his 15th birthday. A very welcome visitor to the Astley Ainslie Hospital, Edinburgh College and St Thomas of Aquins School, Murphy will be a sorely missed pet by his family and as a Therapet by all those he visited.

Pepsi, Labrador Retriever, owned by Kay Wallace, West Lothian

Pepsi was registered as a Therapet in 2019 and visited St John's Hospital in Livingston with owner Kay prior to the pandemic. Pepsi was a welcome visitor to the wards attended and will be much missed by all.

Petra, Weimaraner, owned by Gordon McBrearty, Fife

Petra became a registered Therapet in 2019 undertaking 'Paws Against Stress' Sessions in the Fife Area. Petra was a valued member of the Therapet team and will be missed by her family and all who knew and loved her, including Therapet Housemate, Hanna.

Poppy, Bearded Collie, owned by Heather Graveson, Edinburgh

A Therapet since 2013, Poppy and volunteer Heather were welcome visitors to the 'Sick Kids' Hospital and Colinton Nursing home, in Edinburgh. Poppy received her well-deserved 5-year Father Jim Peat Memorial Medal in 2019 and retired in 2021 at the grand old age of 18. A warm thank you goes to Poppy who will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Rudi, Jack Russell Terrier, owned by Lesley Wilson, Midlothian

Described by Lesley, as a 'playful boy who loves toys and play', Rudi was the proud recipient of his 3-year certificate as a valued member of our Therapet team. Sadly, Rudi died after illness. He will be sorely missed by all who knew

and loved him, not forgetting his Therapet housemate, Harley.

Scrappy, Jack Russell Terrier, owned by Emma McLaren, Borders

Scrappy had been a Therapet since 2018 and had received his well-earned 3-year certificate as a visitor to Knowesouth Nursing Home, and Border General Hospital amongst others. Scrappy was 12 years old and sadly died suddenly earlier this year.

Trudy, Golden Retriever, owned by Graeme Danskin, Edinburgh

Trudy was registered as a Therapet in 2015 and received her well-deserved 5-year medal in 2021. Together with volunteer owner Graeme, they were regular and welcome attendees at 'Paws Against Stress' events, where they helped alleviate exam stress at both Edinburgh and Napier Universities. Trudy was just shy of 13 when she died and is sorely missed by her owner and all who knew and loved her.

Willow, Golden Retriever, owned by Barry Williamson, Edinburgh

Willow had been a registered Therapet since 2014 and had received her hard won 5-year medal in 2019. Willow, together with owner, volunteer and former Area Representative for Edinburgh West, Barry, was a frequent and regular visitor to Belgrave Nursing Home, Penumbra, Murrayfield Nursing Home, & St Augustine's School to name but a few! She had a very busy Therapet schedule from which she gracefully retired in autumn 2021 due to health reasons and old age. Willow sadly died after a quick decline a short time after. Willow will be sorely missed by all who knew her as a Therapet and also as a well-loved family pet - including Therapet housemate, Fern.

If your Therapet has recently passed away, please contact the office and let them know whether or not you wish to continue to receive correspondence. This is important as so much of our communication is instant via email these days and sometimes grieving pet owners want to continue to receive news while others find it too difficult.

Tigger Remembered...

Tigger, the red Miniature Poodle, came to live with us in January 2013. We had actually gone to see the breeder about her new red puppies who were just a few weeks old. However, when I met Tigger, I was drawn to him and not long after, when he was 6 months old, we collected him, and he came home with us. He brought us so much joy and because he got so much positive attention when we were out and about it made me think about him being a Therapet. Therefore, just over 7 years ago Tigger was registered as a Therapet on 6 October 2014.

Douglas Ruthven [Area Representative for Edinburgh & Lothians at that time] suggested that we visit the Royal Victoria Hospital for the Elderly. Most of the patients were suffering from Dementia or Alzheimer's. Some had cancer or had had a stroke. Tigger took it all in his stride. The patients who were interested were all very pleased to be able to stroke and talk to him. It was lovely.

This part of the hospital closed due to a flood but then Douglas arranged for us to visit the local children's hospital, affectionately known as 'the Sick Kids'. This was also a wonderful experience, and I was always so proud of Tigger. He was so popular with the children, the families, and the staff.

Murdo, an Apricot Miniature Poodle, arrived at Xmas 2016. He and Tigger bonded immediately. When he was old enough, Murdo also became a Therapet we regularly attended Edinburgh University 'Paws against Stress' sessions.



Tigger received a Therapet long service medal in 2019 as he had completed 5 years' service.

Sadly, at the beginning of April 2020, Tigger took ill. He went to the vet's and never returned home. I was, and always will be, devastated. He was only seven and we couldn't even say "Goodbye" because of Lockdown. He was the most wonderful pet and Therapet and brought joy to many people. I miss him so much 💔🌀

After Tigger's death, Murdo was okay as my husband, and I were not working because of COVID. I then saw the poem below and it made me think how appropriate it would be to adopt another dog in Tigger's memory and company for Murdo.

We were very lucky as in July we collected young Hudson, another, although much smaller, Apricot Miniature Poodle, from the Doodle Trust. Hudson and Murdo are firm friends and Hudson is a very loving, quirky boy.

We will be attending University 'Paws against Stress' events from December 2021. Murdo is now registered to work with children so when it's possible, we are going to visit the Sick Kids Hospital together. (by Jane Burleigh).

A Dog's Last Will and Testament

Before humans die they write their last will and testament giving all their worldly goods to those they leave behind. If, with my paws I could do the same, this is what I would ask:

To the poor and lonely stray, I'd leave my happy home; my bowl and cosy bed; soft pillow and all my toys; the lap which I loved so much; the hand which stroked my fur; and the sweet voice that spoke my name.

I'd will to the sad scared shelter dog, the place that I had in my human's loving heart, of which there seemed no bounds.

So, when I die, please do not say "I will never have another pet, for the loss and pain is more than I can stand."

Instead, go find an unloved dog, one who's life has held no love or hope, and give my home to him.

This is the only thing I can give... the love I left behind.

Anon

Return to Visiting – One Therapet's Experience

Hi. My name is Jamie and I have been a Therapet for almost 5 and a half years and before Covid lockdown I regularly visited residents in a couple of care homes, patients in two wards in the Mental Health Unit at Forth Valley Hospital and I also support pupils in my local High School with their reading. When Mum got word that we could start visits to care homes and school I was very excited.

Our first visit was to school. Mum contacted the teacher who is our link person and she arranged for Mum to collect some Lateral Flow Tests that she could use prior to our visits, and she also sent us the school's Covid Risk Assessment information so we would know what measures were in place to keep everyone safe. Mum did her LFT the evening before and looked out my special school bandana

that I wear to show that I'm a member of the school community (it's the same tartan as the pupil's school tie). When we arrived, we made our way to the library using the one-way system that had been put in place to prevent congestion in the corridors and to meet the class we would be working with. The librarian had looked out my special red beanbag that I sit on and where my friends come to sit with me. They were so pleased to see me again and I loved



getting lots of attention and listening to them reading. Mum and I felt very safe in the school. Everyone kept socially distanced from Mum and all the humans were wearing masks and there was plenty of sanitiser around. Here's a picture of me on my red beanbag with my friends and another with the book we are reading together.

We have also been back to one of our care homes to visit the residents. Mum had to do another LFT test the night before that had to be recorded on the care home section of the NHS Covid LFT results page and had to keep at least a metre away from the residents. She also had to wear a mask. There were some changes to the layout of the lounge areas of the home and fewer residents in the lounges, but we were allowed to say hello to some residents in their rooms so long as Mum kept socially distanced. Everyone was pleased to see me back and my Carer friend Anne remembered to get me a biscuit from the kitchen!

Mum's advice to any Therapet volunteers who haven't re-started their visits yet would be to contact the setting and ask if they are ready to have visitors again. Ask to see their Risk Assessment and what Covid precautions will be in place and rules you will need to follow. If you are not comfortable by what is in place, then there is no pressure to return until you are ready. We felt very safe on both our visits and are looking forward to getting the go ahead to go back to our hospital visits in the not-too-distant future.

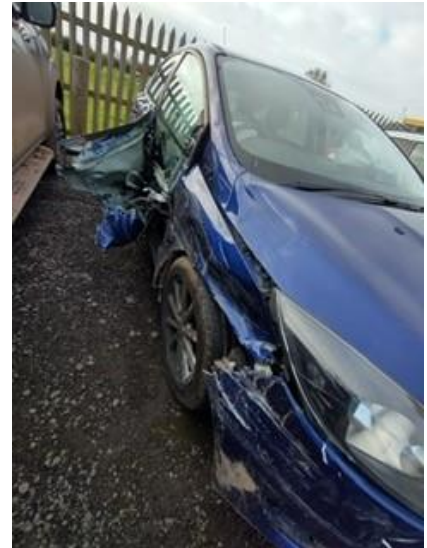
Good luck,
Jamie and Mum Janette

Pet Health – Travelling in Cars

In our last newsletter, we highlighted the Highway Code rules about transporting an animal in a vehicle. This email, from volunteer Eileen Scott in the Borders, is a prime example of why this is so important. Luckily, in this instance, everyone involved, including Therapet Milo, had a lucky escape and have recovered from their ordeal.

We were going away for the weekend to celebrate Neal's birthday in November. Milo was with us as we were staying in a Travelodge and they take dogs. Milo has been several times and gets on fine. At a crossroads, we were hit by a vehicle with a trailer. The driver said he didn't realise it was a junction. We were taken to Borders General Hospital and Neal had a haematoma at the top of his leg and I had badly bruised ribs. Milo was fine as he was wearing his

safety harness and in his bed behind me. It's a miracle that Neal wasn't more seriously injured. The car (pictured) was written off. The Duns police took Milo while we were in hospital which was only a couple of hours. The problem is you are discharged from hospital then have to get home. Luckily, we met a couple of women I used to work with who took us to collect Milo, then home. We are all fine now. Poor Milo doesn't like loud noises at the best of times then we disappeared, and he was taken away. He has been back to visit Turnbull Court retirement housing and really enjoyed the extra attention.



Scotland's Best Dog is a Therapist!

Some of you may have enjoyed watching recent BBC programme, 'Scotland's Best Dog', hosted by broadcaster Kaye Adams, dog behaviourist River McDonald, and dog trainer Alan Grant. You may have spotted a Therapist or two during the heats where dogs and their owners participated in a number of different challenges testing their relationship and skills. Recent Therapist recruit



Poppy, the Cocker Spaniel, and new volunteer Hannah Miley, retired European, Commonwealth and Olympic swimmer, won the hearts of the judges to become 'Scotland's Best Dog'.

More information is available here <https://bbc.in/346Rji0> and the series is available to watch on BBC iPlayer.

Animal Assisted Therapy Research

We have had a request for participants in a research honours project from social science student Sophie Bell at Napier University. Her research is on Animal Assisted Therapy used for Young Autistic People and would involve an online interview. Sophie says "I am not looking for those who receive therapy,

only those who have witnessed the therapeutic impact of animals or have helped deliver it. Participants must be over the age of 18". If interested in participating in this, please contact Sophie on her email 40398906@live.napier.ac.uk

Volunteer Coordination Roles

Area Representatives

We would like to welcome two new new teams in the Stirlingshire and Edinburgh West regions. Our new Area Representative for **Stirlingshire** is Marion Reddie She will be supported by Maggi Allan in Stirling and Jeanette Kean in Falkirk. In **Edinburgh West**, our new Area Representative is Hilary Bruff and she will be supported by long term volunteer Ian Gidney. All contact details will be updated on our website shortly

<https://www.canineconcernscotland.org.uk/area-representatives>

Our Area Representative for **Midlothian**, Laura Weddell, has decided to step back from this role. Laura works for the NHS and is also a mum and has found her time stretched too thin to be able to contribute what she would like to this role. We would like to thank Laura for her work and hopefully we can still see her and Mollie out doing the occasional Therapet visit.

We would like to say a massive thank you to Margaret Ewing who has had to step back from her role as Area Representative in **Badenoch and Strathspey** due to health reasons. Margaret has a small team of volunteers but they have been very active in and around Grantown on Spey, Aviemore, and surrounds. They were also the only group of volunteers who undertook an annual sponsored walk until the pandemic hit - lets hope they can all meet up for this again soon! If anyone from Margaret's team is interested in taking over the Area Representative role, please do get in touch, however in the meantime, Stewart Donald in Inverness is supporting volunteers in this area.

In the Highlands, volunteer Pauline Millar and Therapets Coal and Ember the black Labradors, will be spreading the Therapet awareness around Thurso and surrounds. This will support Area Rep Stewart Donald, who is Inverness based as geographically, the Highlands is a vast area!

In **East Lothian**, June Forson has done a great job undertaking Therapet assessments. Unfortunately, due to family health issues, she has had to take a

step back from volunteering at present, however, we hope that things go well and she will be able to join us again soon. We have been without an Area Representative for East Lothian for a while now, so if you are interested in this, please get in touch.

In **Dumfries**, Area Representative Annette Adair has also had to take a step back due to family health issues. Annette has been so enthusiastic in promoting the Therapet service in Dumfries and the immediate vicinity, particularly with schools. We hope she will be able to re-join us at some future point. Dumfries and Galloway is such a large area that this may be split geographically.

Vacant Positions

We are looking for members to take on the role of an Area Representative. These roles may be shared or split into different aspects, e.g., someone overseeing 'Paws against Stress' events, school activities or assessing and placing new volunteers. Or it might be a geographical split due to the size of the region you may be in. Please email Mel on mel.hughes@canineconcernscotland.org.uk if you would like to know more about any of these positions.

- Ayrshire South Area Representative
- Dumfries & Galloway Area Representative
- East Lothian Area Representative
- Midlothian Area Representative
- Perthshire Area Representative

Fundraising and Donations

As a charity we rely solely on donations and grants from charitable trusts and all of the money raised goes into the administration and operation of the charity, in particular, our Therapet Visiting Service. We have some ideas for fundraising on our website <https://www.canineconcernscotland.org.uk/donations-fundraising> under the categories **Individual, Group, School, Sponsorship, and Wills**. If you have fundraising ideas and would like to discuss them, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Fundraising Events

Look out for more information on our 'Stepping Out For Scotland' sponsored walk coming to you in the weeks ahead as we plan for April 2022.

Some of the recent fundraising activities that have taken place are outlined below. We have also received donations from running corporate 'Paws Against Stress' events for staff mental health days from companies such as Ikea and we frequently receive donations from collections at funeral services from people who have been connected with us, received a visit from a Therapet or who have a general interest in what we do.

Allison's Athens Marathon

Congratulations to volunteer Allison Aspinall for completing the Athens Marathon in November and raising £1080 for us.



The route covered the same ground that the Athenian messenger, Phidippides, ran when he brought news of victory from the battlefield of Marathon 2,500 years ago. The finish line was in the Athens Olympic Stadium, birthplace of the Modern Olympic Games in 1896.

Allison had previous experience running a marathon but with the pandemic and change of climate, she was quite nervous and only received final approval that the race was on days before it was due to take place. With constantly changing regulations on international travel, it was slightly stressful completing the paperwork on top of preparing for the race.

April Clocking Up Charity Work Hours!

Thanks go to our volunteer April Ponton who donated £181.46 to us after completing 20 hours of voluntary work between July and December 2021. April's employer Franklin Templeton, have a scheme whereby the employee can choose a Charity to receive a US\$250 donation on the completion of 20 hours of charity work - and April very kindly chose us!

Here is Bailey, April's Therapet looking smart on his recent return to Therapet duties!



McDug Nutrition Fundraising for Therapet Visits

Founder and owner of McDug Nutrition, Rab Macleod is raising funds to help charities like Canine Concern Scotland Trust who provide dogs to support children with their reading in schools, as well as Therapets who visit hospitals and care homes all year-round providing therapy and companionship to those who love animals and can't have a pet of their own to look after. Rab is the brother of one of our volunteers and has set up a JustGiving page in order to do this. Here is his story:

"My first memories of dogs are watching my grandfather with his border collie, Flash, herding sheep back down to the croft. I was always fascinated by the close bond between them. My own close relationship with our canine pals came when a switched-on doctor suggested to my parents that a dog might help me at school.



You see, I'm dyslexic and I really struggled in the traditional school environment. Back in the 70s and the 80s, being different wasn't something that was celebrated. And despite my parents working tirelessly to try to get me the help I needed, I still found school a traumatic experience.

And so when that doctor suggested to my parents that a dog would help? It kick-started a bond that became lifelong. Since then, I've always been a dog owner, they've been with me through thick and thin.

It's a huge part of my vision to support children who have additional learning needs and help them to have the positive learning experience at school that I didn't have. When children learn in a relaxed environment, they take in so much more than when they're stressed - and they become encouraged to read, write, and explore more often - building a lifelong love of learning. Reading Dogs are an amazing way to foster this environment (I'm living proof of that!)."

The link to Rab's JustGiving page is <https://bit.ly/3FpKNzV> and it is called '*Rab's Canine Concern Scotland Trust*'

Turn used stamps into donations...

We have received information from Dawson Shearer at DS Stamps that he is able to recycle stamps and use them to make small donations to charity.

"As an avid, lifelong stamp collector and dealer I am currently accepting modern used postage stamps and unwanted collections on behalf of a number of charities. From the proceeds raised through the sale of these bulk lots I am able to send donations to the donors' designated charities and, although income is generally modest, it does allow anyone to get involved in fundraising without the need to contribute monetarily. In addition to benefiting good causes, it hopefully also prevents collectible philatelic material being consigned to the wastepaper bin.

If you regularly receive stamps on your mail, cut them off the envelope, save them up until you have several to make a package and send them to Dawson, stating the name of the charity you would like to support, to:

DS Stamps
PO BOX 6107
Stromness
KW16 9AB

More information is available on their Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/DSStamps2021/>

Please remember to send us articles and photographs for our next newsletter in April. Deadline for these is mid-April.