

Canine Concern Scotland Trust
Incorporating Therapet®

Scottish Charity No: SC014924



Bulletin No. 99 September 2020

Dear Members, Volunteers, Therapets and Friends

We sincerely hope that you have all been keeping fit and well throughout lockdown and are managing to maintain some level of sanity during these unusual circumstances. Volunteers have reported their Therapets are noticeably struggling without their regular visiting schedule and we have some advice from our 'resident' veterinarian included later on.

Firstly, an apology for not getting this newsletter out to you during August as is the norm, but we have been busy behind the scenes with future planning and making the necessary adjustments to paperwork. We have had to update many of our forms and procedures as well as write risk assessments. There is still a need for funding as we do have operational and administrative overheads throughout the year and we need to ensure we have sufficient funds to support our work when our visiting services do resume. Our office remains closed, but we visit it regularly to deal with mail and Lesley continues to monitor the emails. The Trustee Directors have been active through virtual meetings and, as their meetings were taking place right up until the 30th August, it was prudent to leave the newsletter until such time as material from these could be included.

So...in the meantime, we continue to offer virtual visits to those we support who have asked for them. Read on to find out more and about other ways that you may be able to get involved, including our virtual sponsored walk which will take place in October.

The Area Representatives have been meeting virtually and our next meeting will be on 10th September to discuss the latest Scottish Government measures to be announced on that date. We are very aware also, that some volunteers may not wish to rush back into visiting and once we do give the green light for visits to resume, there will be no expectation for our volunteers to start until they are comfortable doing so.

The big question that we know is on everyone's mind is when are we likely to resume Therapet visiting? The honest answer is that we do not know. We are still in Phase 3 of lockdown and there has been an increase in localised transmission of the Coronavirus. We have been in regular communication with NHS boards around Scotland and it is clear that they are not yet operating all essential services, therefore it will be some time before non-essential volunteer services will be permitted to visit healthcare settings. Care Homes are understandably being very cautious about who visits and although our educational partners are keen to have us back in working with children, their 'superiors' are not yet willing to take that risk. As you will no doubt have guessed, insurance policies for charities now have an exclusion for Coronavirus Covid-19 issues. We therefore need to assess the many variables before visiting services resume and make our decisions based on minimising risk to all involved. Keep monitoring our website, social media and your email for any updates.

Take care everyone

Mel Hughes
CEO

News from the Trustee Directors

During lockdown, the use of technology and video calling has allowed the Board to keep in regular contact to monitor the ongoing situation. There are three committees that oversee our work and they have been actively working on developments to fulfil our aims and objectives. In June, the following was posted on our website:

"After considering legal advice received, the Trustees of CCST decided that a limited company should be formed and that it would be appointed as the sole Trustee of CCST in place of individual Trustees. To this end Canine Concern Scotland Trustee Limited was incorporated on 31 March 2020 with retiring Trustees Stewart Donald, George Leslie, James Macdonald, Allan Sim, Lynsey Thomson, Diane Wood and Simon Young being appointed Trustee Directors of the Company along with Janet Jones, Area Representative for Edinburgh North East. Long-standing Trustees, Val Marrian and Douglas Ruthven, decided that the time had come for them to retire completely and were therefore not appointed to the Board of the new company. The appointment of Canine Concern Scotland Trustee Limited and the retirement of the individual Trustees became effective on 13 June 2020 by the completion of a Deed of Assumption and Conveyance. Full details of the Trustee Directors are given in the ABOUT drop-down menu on our website".



Janet and Fitch



Carole and her crew

We are pleased to announce that in addition to Janet Jones joining the Board in early June, Carole Ledingham who is Area Representative for Aberdeen South and South West, has also been appointed as a Trustee Director. Janet has a lengthy involvement in charitable work and Carole has an extensive history of working in the NHS, both of which are proving to be invaluable in the discussions we have had recently. We look forward to their continued work on the Board and as volunteers in future.



- # 1: CCST Founder, the late Marjorie Henley Price, had never owned a dog and knew little about them before she met and married Nick.

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 in June, we have sadly said goodbye to the following Therapets:

Annie, Irish Setter, owned by Mary Innes, Fife

Annie had been a Therapet since April 2010. As a more recent visitor to Queen Margaret Hospital in Dunfermline, she attended events throughout Fife and always returned to her origins to support events in the Aviemore area such as the annual 'Stepping out for Scotland' sponsored walk.



Archie, English Springer Spaniel, owned by Gillian Cheyne, Glasgow & Strathclyde

Archie registered as a Therapet in March 2019. Over the next eight months he regularly visited a care home in his local area but sadly had to withdraw from visits due to illness.

Bute, Bichon Frise, owned by Elizabeth Mulholland, Glasgow & Strathclyde

Bute had been a Therapet since July 2012. She visited a local care home in Renfrew and for over three years supported children at Newmains Primary School, Renfrew through 'Reading with Dogs'. They will all miss her!

Cassie, Yorkshire Terrier/Jack Russell Terrier cross, owned by Caroline Joss, Glasgow & Strathclyde

Cassie registered as a Therapet in January 2013 and was an active participant in 'Paws against Stress' sessions as well as visiting a care home in Erskine, a day centre in Greenock and providing 'Reading with Dogs' throughout the Clydebank area. Cassie is on the cover of one of our leaflets.

Clyde, Labrador/Collie Cross, owned by Mauveen McColl, Ayrshire

Clyde registered as a Therapet in January 2018 and visited a care home in Troon.

Jake, Lurcher, owned by Alison & Howard Miller, South Lanarkshire

Jake registered as a Therapet in October 2017. He visited several wards in Wishaw General Hospital. Sadly, in March this year, he had to have a leg removed due to bone cancer and retired from visiting at this time.

Meg The Dog Percival, Labrador Collie Cross, owned by Michael Percival, Aberdeenshire

Meg was registered as a Therapet in March 2013. She supported every event possible in the Aberdeen area and her dad Mike was popular with other Therapets for bringing along dog sausages! Meg also visited care homes, the Cyrenians, individual visits, and 'Paws against Stress' sessions.

Millie, Miniature Schnauzer, owned by Mary Clarke, Stirlingshire

Millie had been registered as a Therapet since January 2012. Her regular visits were to Randolph Hill Nursing Home in Dunblane and an individual where she spent many long, happy hours in the company of people who adored her. Millie was 12 years old.

Minnie, Greyhound, owned by Gemma, Edinburgh West

Registered as a Therapet in February 2019, Minnie was not able to visit as frequently as she might have liked due to Gemma's work schedule, however, she enjoyed what she was able to contribute, in particular, at the Police Scotland 'Paws against Stress' session held at Fettes in December 2019.

Nala, Golden Retriever, owned by Mark Fiskien, Fife

Nala registered as a Therapet in September 2015. She started her 'career' at a resource centre in Rosyth and at Daleview, Lynebank Hospital, Dunfermline working with learning disabilities and progressed to working with children in schools.

Nessie, Golden Retriever, owned by Sadie McKenzie, West Lothian

Nessie had been registered as a Therapet since January 2019. She visited Braid House Day Centre, Livingston, and the Stroke Ward at St John's Hospital in Livingston. She loved her visits and people loved seeing her. She was eight years old.

Noodle, Beagle, owned by Amy McKenzie, Aberdeenshire North

Noodle registered as a Therapet in February 2016 and was involved in many activities throughout the Aberdeen region. As one of the lead actors in our 2019 remake of our film 'Children and Dogs', Noodle also enjoyed regular visits to a care home and was one of the first Therapet Canine Crew at Aberdeen Airport. Noodle was crowned 'Therapet of the Year 2019' due to this prolific work.

Rhum, Gordon Setter, owned by Jocelyn Ness, Edinburgh West

Rhum registered as a Therapet in July 2009. He visited care homes in Edinburgh and was nominated for Therapet of the Year in 2019. He made such an impression on the residents at Strachan House that they have requested a memorial of him, perhaps in the form of a bench. Rhum was 12 years old.

Ria, German Shepherd, owned by Janet Thorpe, South Lanarkshire

Ria had been a Therapet since May 2019, visiting a care home in Larkhall and Hairmyres Hospital, East Kilbride. Ria sadly died very suddenly and is greatly missed.

Taffy, Flat Coated Retriever, owned by Lynsay Laird, Borders

Taffy had been a Therapet since September 2016. He accompanied Lynsay in significant work with Penumbra but also visited a nursing home in Peebles, participated in 'Paws against Stress' sessions at Heriot Watt University Borders Campus and Borders College and was always ready for a radio interview.

Willow, Old English Sheepdog, owned by James & Lynn Macdonald, Glasgow & Strathclyde

Willow registered as a Therapet in January 2013. She was a patient girl who enjoyed children braiding her hair while participating in numerous 'Reading with Dogs' sessions at schools in and around Glasgow. She visited the Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice in Glasgow and contributed to 'Paws against Stress' sessions at multiple venues. She assisted James during talks to uniform groups and was always ready for a media or public relations event. Willow was 11 years old.

Apologies if we have missed any Therapet®. Please do let us know and we will give them a mention in our next newsletter.

Volunteer Coordination Roles

New Area Representative

We are delighted to welcome Lorna Ravell as our new Area Representative for South Lanarkshire. Lorna's contact details are now on our website in the drop-down menu 'About' under 'Area Representatives'.

This is Lorna and her dogs doing a sponsored 5km walk or cycle, every day, for 50 days earlier this year to raise money for us.

Vacant Positions

We are still looking for someone to coordinate the following positions. Area Representative roles may be shared or split into different projects, e.g. someone overseeing 'Paws against Stress' events, school activities or assessing and placing new volunteers. Please email Mel on mel.hughes@canineconcernscotland.org.uk if you would like to know more about any of these positions.

- Dumfries & Galloway - Annette Adair is in Dumfries but we need someone further west to assist with the Area Representative work
- Edinburgh West Area Representative
- Perthshire Area Representative



Annual Awards Lunch

As you will no doubt have guessed, due to the ongoing situation with Coronavirus, we have had to cancel our annual awards lunch which was due to be held in November. We hope that things are up and running again for us to make it an extra special affair in 2021. Please do look on our website for details of the awards and how you and your Therapet could potentially be nominated for one next year.

<https://www.canineconcernscotland.org.uk/2019-ccst-awards>



If you were the recipient of an award in 2019 we will make arrangements for you to return it to the office after November for safe keeping and preparation for the 2021 awards.

Pet Health

We are very fortunate to have two veterinarian experts on our Board of Trustee Directors and our recent discussions have evolved around answering questions put to us from volunteers. Stewart Donald, who is also our Highlands & Islands Area Representative, answers some of them here. Another useful site is The Kennel Club where you will find useful information on Coronavirus and dogs. <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/health/for-owners/coronavirus/dog-owners-and-coronavirus-covid-19-faqs/>

Depression in Therapets

Many Therapet owners have noticed that their animal's behaviour has changed during the lockdown period. With a lack of 'social life' and not being able to undertake their usual visits as a volunteer, dogs in particular have been noticeably different. It is possible for dogs to exhibit symptoms of what we would term depression in humans as their activity and interest levels have changed. Stewart recommends interactive activities to mentally and physically stimulate your pet, as well as regular walking and grooming to keep them motivated and interested until such time as their visiting routine may be reintroduced.

Vaccinations and check ups

Due to the lockdown, appointments with your vet for non-emergency treatment may have been cancelled. Most veterinary practices are returning to some semblance of regular operations, with Covid-safe procedures in place. If your dog/cat was due to have an annual health check or vaccinations during this period and the appointment was cancelled, please do contact your vet to see when it may be rescheduled. It is our policy that all Therapets must be vaccinated annually and on a regular regime of parasite (flea and worming) treatment as per your vet's advice. So, if your vaccinations are overdue, these will need to be undertaken prior to the animal resuming visiting Therapet services.



'Virtual' Therapet Visits

Around the country, our volunteers continue to offer virtual visits, entertaining those in care homes, hospices, hospitals, schools, and individuals as requested. With the new semesters starting in the universities and colleges, we are in discussion with several institutes around the country to offer virtual 'Paws against Stress' sessions to those students who are away from home for the first time, feeling anxious about the situation with the Coronavirus, dealing with grief and loss or struggling with academics. Area Representatives will contact volunteers in their region as and when we have details for these virtual sessions.



#2: Therapet has been a registered trademark since 2000.

A Key Worker's Lockdown Experience

By Lynsey Thomson, Trustee Director, Area Rep (Stirlingshire) and NHS Staff

This is a personal account about how my life has changed during the current pandemic. It is not written to cause offence but instead to highlight the severity of the situation.

In early March when the information started to become public about Covid-19, the hospital had already been preparing. We were already getting daily updates about changes to day to day running of the wards, what types of PPE were available, when it was needed, in what order it should be put on and taken off. Everyday we were getting 5-10 emails with additional information, changes to previously e-mailed information, information about mandatory training that we had to complete and all the while we had a ward full of patients who we needed to discharge as quick and safely as we could. I was coming home at night with my head buzzing and mentally drained from information overload. Trying to rest as best I could knowing that I was going back into the do the same tomorrow. Throw into the mix normal family life, shopping, housework, and things are manic.

When the announcement came that the schools were going to close, anxiety levels raised. I was now stuck in a situation where I was having to try and deal with work, sort child care and try to reassure children that everything was going to be ok.....Frantically trying to arrange child care, more uncertainty at work about how and where I might be working, children not really understanding why they are suddenly needing to make sure that they have EVERYTHING that they might need for the rest of the academic year, at home, just in case and all the while, trying to maintain a sense of calm!!

Lockdown came and all of a sudden everything hit home;

I am a keyworker, in a hospital where we are treating patients who have tested positive for Covid-19.

I am a mother whose instinct is to protect her children yet every day I go to my work I know that I could be putting them at risk when I come home.

I am now their teacher and trying to fit their education into our lives while trying to explain why they can't see their friends.

And all the while, we still have a house to run, shopping to get and cooking to do.

To start with, people seemed to be treating it like a holiday! Watching the news and seeing all the Campervans that were out enjoying the Scottish countryside. They just don't get it....This is NOT a holiday. You are putting people at risk!

The hospital's beds are filling up. Staff members are going off with symptoms. More guidelines were coming out and my whole work routine changed. Not so much the roles and responsibilities of my job but instead the way I went about things.

Generally my day to day work remained, and still, was much the same, but the preparation and carrying out of everything had changed. What was once second nature to me now required thinking through. My work "stuff" now sits in a sealed plastic box at my front door. My car keys are sealed away too. I have disinfectant hand gel and wipes in my car and at my front door and use them when entering and leaving. I have work clothes and shoes which too are kept separate, a mobile phone, no longer in its case but now in a small plastic bag (wiped and disinfected what seems like constantly), daily uniform washes and a set way to get everything in and out of the house safely. The kids know that they have to wait until I am in, washed and changed before they can get a hug. Their greetings changed for "Hi Mum" to "Are you clean?" My car, inside and out has never been cleaner as it is cleaned in disinfectant, if not between shifts, then on days off.

At work I now wear a surgical mask all day, everyday. Unless I'm dealing with a patient who has tested positive, then its full PPE, the amount of which depends on the task being carried out. It can be uncomfortable and very hot at times but it needs to be done. It took me a few days to get used to it. It felt very claustrophobic at first. I found myself thinking about how I was breathing and trying not to take too deep a breath. You soon become use to it and sometimes forget that it's there. I've lost count of the number of times that I have tried to mouth something to my colleague for them to lip read to remember half way through that they can't see my lips! Patients, on the whole, seem to have accepted the new ward way. Some have struggled with not having visitors but ward staff are doing their best to keep them connected with phone calls and video chats. It just all feels very surreal at times.

At home, life continues. We are home schooling the best we can, utilising the allocating shopping times at supermarkets, doing the general household chores and trying our best not to get on each other's nerves. On days off we are trying to rest up as best we can. It's hard sometimes to switch off from work. Most importantly we are staying at home.

A few weeks in and the roads to work are now quiet. Most people seem to be getting the message, but not all. On the way home I repeatedly pass cars parked at tourist spots. I only wish that they could see the impact that this disease is having on people, the strain and fear in my colleagues faces every day.

Every Thursday night we join in the Clap for the nation's key workers. As an NHS worker I can honestly say that the country's support is keeping us going. I have stood at my door each week and to see so many people out is truly heart-warming. Work is difficult just now and it's good to know that everyone is behind us. On the 28th of April, I stood with my colleagues on the ward to mark International Workers' Memorial Day. At 11 am there was a minute silence across the hospital to commemorate all of those frontline workers who have sadly passed away during this pandemic. People like me who were just doing their job – because that is what I am doing.....My Job. I did not join the NHS to make a fortune; I joined to make a difference.

Covid-19 is real. It is a horrific storm virus which is sweeping the world and leaving a trail of destruction and devastation in its path. But after every storm there is a rainbow. The rainbow will come but until then, on behalf of NHS staff and all key workers, please continue to follow the Government Guidelines and help to end the storm.

Lockdown 'Bring Your Dog to Work' Day



Hi - my name is Romey
Normally I come to work with my 'Mum', Lesley who is the Office Supervisor for Therapets here in Edinburgh. I love seeing my friends Norma and Carole there every day too - they also work in the office and give me special treats when I am feeling a bit bored waiting for my Mum to finish work and take me to the park. I have a whole box of toys and chews there too!

Sadly the office is closed for now, and we don't go there like we used to, but I don't understand why.

I miss seeing my furry friends Luna, Bella and Roxy who used to pop into the office sometimes and we had a play together, and they got treats too. It makes the office a very nice place to work and if we have a stressful day, everyone gives me an extra hug and we all feel better. I hope I will be going back to the office soon to see everyone, but we don't know when that will be, so in the meantime I am keeping Mum company at home while she works on her laptop. I lie in my bed beside where she is working, or I lie on the couch and watch her (see photo). If she stops for coffee - I usually get a couple of sausages (my favourite treat) and that helps to pass the time. When she is finished work, I am very happy as I know we will soon be going out for a lovely walk in the park and to play with my football.



Take care of yourselves everyone and stay safe - woof!



#3: We have 7 cats registered as Therapets.

Hospice Get Together

Earlier this year, prior to lockdown, our volunteers who visit St. Columba's Hospice in Edinburgh were able to get together for a rare coffee and catch up. They all visit on different days and rarely meet each other so it was a good opportunity to say hello and for the Hospice staff to provide any information or training as needed.



Coffee and a catch up?

As travelling round the country, visiting events, and meeting other members and our Therapets is not going to be possible in the short/medium term, we will be holding a series of virtual get together opportunities by region. Many of you may be 'zoomed out', but it will give those of you who want it, the opportunity to chat, ask questions and meet other volunteers. Emails will be issued with further information about these. Hopefully, at some point we will be able to offer some online interest talks, such as about conditions that we may come across when undertaking our visits. If you are an expert in a particular field and feel you have something to offer through a short virtual information session, please do let us know.

Join Us for 'Stepping Out for Scotland 2020'

Looking for a challenge?

Want to put your daily dog walking to good use?

Why not join us for a sponsored 'virtual' Stepping Out for Scotland during the weekend of **30th October - 1st November**. Our aim is to see how many times we can collectively walk the North Coast 500 (NC500). Walking 3, 5 or 10 miles over the weekend (or more!) depending on you and your dog's ability and we should be able to get round the NC500 at least once!



This is usually a group event and in recent years it has been our volunteers in Badenoch & Strathspey that have done this. However, this year, with the government guidelines about Coronavirus, group events are not yet possible. We would like to see as many volunteers across the country get involved in their own way, from their own homes.

More information will be issued shortly so save the date!



Therapet Merchandise

Responding to volunteer requests, we now stock our blue Polo Shirts in sizes from Small through to 3XL. If you've gained a few pounds over lockdown, fear not as we will have larger sizes available once our office is up and running again.

Polo Shirts are £15 inc p&p.



Survey

We have been contacted by a lady who is an MSC graduate of Clinical Neuropsychology from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. She is undertaking research into the potential of pairing people with Parkinson's Disease or Lewy Body Dementia with a service dog.

While this does not directly involve us as we do not offer service dog training, if anyone is aware of someone who has the aforementioned conditions, or their caregiver who would be interested in taking the survey, the link is [http:// https://forms.gle/GPr5thkStbzPchbD8](http://https://forms.gle/GPr5thkStbzPchbD8) If you would like more information, we can pass on the researcher's details.

Corporate Sponsorship

Do you work for, or have links with, a company that has an interest in animals and human welfare?

Could they support us through corporate sponsorship or staff fundraising initiatives in return for some 'Paws against Stress' events to support staff mental health and wellbeing?

We have a range of activities and events that we would welcome support with, including:

- Funding for our Reading with Dogs programme
- Funding for our 'Paws against Stress' programme
- Funding for the administration of Therapet visits to hospitals, care homes, prisons, specialist centres, hospices etc
- Funding for events such as our Annual Award Lunch, Regional Volunteer meetings, long service awards, events equipment
- Funding for core office and administration costs

If you think this is something we can discuss further, please get in touch with us info@canineconcernscotland.org.uk



Fundraising

We are very fortunate to have people donating in many ways such as using our Just Giving Fundraising page, sending us cheques, or donating through legacies. During lockdown, some have undertaken personal challenges such as walking or cycling set distances, while others have made donations as thank you or in memorial of family, friends, and pets. Many donations we receive are anonymous and we would like to thank everyone who has donated.



Supporter Alex Harkins and Family Cycling 500km

Fundraising through Online Shopping

You don't have to physically do anything to help us fundraise for us. In our last newsletter, we informed you that we have signed up with easyfundraising and Amazon Smile. If you use these sites and nominate us as your chosen charity, we receive a small percentage of purchases made.



Amazon will contribute 0.5% of eligible purchases to our charity. To nominate us as your chosen charity when using Amazon, please go to the following link
<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC014924>



Remember we are registered with easyfundraising, which means you can help us for FREE. Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! These include utilities, insurance, financial, broadband and phone providers. All you need to do is sign up and remember to use easyfundraising whenever you shop online www.canineconcernscotland.org.uk

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