

Canine Concern Scotland Trust

incorporating Therapet®

Scottish Charity No SC014924

Spring/Summer 2023



Bulletin No: 106



Celebrating 35 years

1988 - 2023

"It all began with Holly."

On 26th April 1988, Canine Concern Scotland Trust was officially registered as a Scottish Charity. The work of Marjorie Henley Price in the years prior to this led to her passionately establishing her own charity. Marjorie, the late wife of our Secretary and Treasurer, Nick, wrote about her experiences in her comedic autobiography 'Sprigs of Holly' (2004). Marjorie had never owned a dog prior to marrying Nick and the special relationship that she established with their first Boxer, Holly, led to lots of adventures, happy memories and ultimately the development of our Therapet service..

In 1975, Marjorie was incensed by a tv programme where "The whole hour was spent denigrating dogs and was so alarmist in nature that the panic it must have caused to many families already owning a dog could well be imagined." The programme focused on the risks of disease, accidents and fouling and focused significantly on the disease 'Toxocariasis' and issues that it may cause

blindness in children. In those days there was little notion of clearing up after a dog had relieved itself in the street and the resultant press caused an almost anti-canine campaign around the UK. Marjorie stated that "If I had not had Holly, bless her, and had no knowledge of the great delight animals bring, I realised I could well have believed this". This led Marjorie and Nick on to their life's work advocating for dogs, establishing CCST and the Therapet service, and ensuring the management of this to get us to where we are today....867 members across Scotland with 944 Therapets, 6 of which are cats.

The black & white photo above shows Marjorie with Holly, and Holly's son, Baron. We have a lovely painting of both dogs hanging in our office in Leith.

News from the Board

Our Board met on Sunday 23rd April in Stirling; face to face for the first time since 2019. It was a good meeting, with progress in several areas. Our Annual Report & Accounts for 2022 were approved. These have been published on our website. A consideration was made of our budget for the coming year and into 2025. Our Risk Register was updated and the committees fed back to the full Board. The CEO reported on the day to day operations of the charity, highlighting key developments. We also discussed our involvement in the Scottish Government's Cross Party Group on Animal Welfare, where we raised a concern around firework noise. We have also responded to consultations regarding the proposed Dog Abduction (Scotland) Bill, and dog walker licensing.

We were joined virtually by our IT providers, who updated us on the progress of our membership portal, and the development of our new website. We are very excited about these projects and will be sharing more information about the launch of these soon.

Welcome New Therapets!

Welcome to all new Therapets and Volunteers; we hope you are able to start visiting soon, if you have not already done so. If you are able to attend them, 'Paws Against Stress' events are a good way of getting some experience if we cannot offer you a more regular place to visit yet. Your local Area Representative will send out information on these unless there is a 'PAWS' specific coordinator in your area. Below are photos of some Therapets who have started in the last few months and there are many more on our Twitter, Instagram and Facebook pages. We would love to include everyone but the newsletter would never end! Apologies in advance if there are any errors with spellings or names!





Top Left: Therapet Percy & Caitlin at The Elms Care Home, Edinburgh
Top Right: Therapet Millie & Michelle at Antonine House Care Home, Glasgow
Bottom Left: Therapet Phoenix & Aidan, Seaton Grove Care Home, Arbroath
Bottom Right: Therapet Cash & Arlene, Rannoch Lodge Nursing Home, Cumbernauld

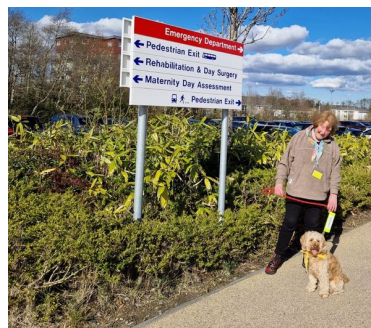


Top Left: Therapet Waffle & Kate, Milngavie Manor, Milngavie
Top Right: Therapet Betty & Naomi, Linkwood View, Elgin
Bottom Left: Therapet Levi & Erin, Kingsley Care Home, Paisley
Bottom Right: Therapet Poppy & Louise, Russell Park Rehab Centre, Larbert





Top Left: Therapet Charlie & Lynne, Badenscoth House, Rothienorman
Top Right: Therapet Maisie & David, Clackmannan Community Hospital, Alloa
Bottom Left: Therapet Freya & Dorothy, Ivybank Care Home, Polmont
Bottom Right: Therapet Braegha & June, Fife College, Fife



Top: Therapet Odin & Becky, Gilbertson Day Centre, Orkney
Mid Left: Therapet Brodi & Lauren, The Haven, South Queensferry
Mid Right: Therapet Holly & Marion, Hairyres Hospital, East Kilbride

Bottom Left: Therapet Hugo & Shannon, PAWS@RGU, Aberdeen

Bottom Right: Therapet Lochy & Kirstin/John, Castlegreen Care Home, Edinburgh



Top Left: Therapet Hamish & Letitia, raring to go, South Lanarkshire

Top Right: Therapet Orla & Angela, PAWS event, Aberdeenshire

Bottom Left: Therapet Buddy & Julie, Overstep Care Home, Dornoch

Bottom Right: Therapet Annie with Ian & Lindsey, PAWS event, West Lothian

Annual Awards Lunch 2023

We are pleased to welcome the return of our Annual Awards Lunch & Ceremony which we have been unable to hold since 2019 due to the onset of Covid and the ensuing disruption to our Therapet Visiting Service. This year, our Award Ceremony will take place at the Stirling Court Hotel, in the University of Stirling, on Sunday 26th November.

The purpose of this is to celebrate the achievements of our volunteers and Therapets over the course of this year. This event is open to all volunteers and we will send out information on how nominations are made for our Therapet of the Year award nearer the time. Awards will be made this year in the following categories:

The Spencer Award for Therapet of the Year

This award was donated by Tom and Dorothy Wilkins, whose Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, SPENCER, was the very first dog to be registered in the Therapet scheme, way back in 1988. Therapets are nominated by owners/Area Reps and the Directors decide on the recipient. Information on this will be issued later in the year.



The Iain Whyte Award

This award is made to a person or organisation whose work has been of special benefit to the Trust over the past year or a period of years and this was donated by Betty Lawson Whyte in memory of husband Iain Whyte.

Our Directors decide on the recipient



Therapet Organiser of the Year

This award was donated in memory of a very special gentleman and his very special dog - Dr Morris Andrew and Daniel the Spaniel. It was made by members of his family who agreed that it should go to the THERAPET ORGANISER of the Year since Morris himself, as well as being a Trustee, represented Edinburgh for many years.

The Award is not voted on. The Admin team decide on the recipient as they know all about our Area Representatives and Coordinators - at least all about the work they do for the Trust - so who better to make the decision! It is not easy of course. We have so many wonderful people around Scotland who give of their valuable time and do magnificent work for the charity.

The Award is decided by the Administration team (CEO & Office Staff).



We have two other awards that we usually issue which are based on organising and fundraising a sponsored walk. This year, due to us being so busy with the Therapet visits, it is unlikely that we will present these as we haven't organised any events.

Aberdeen Social Evening

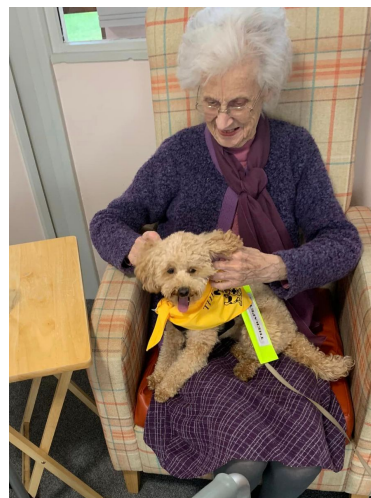
Our volunteers in and around Aberdeen raised a whopping £1100 for us at their recent social event at Union Kirk, Aberdeen. It was an evening of fun with a quiz and game, obligatory cake, a raffle, an opportunity to buy Therapet goods, and some informative talks. A huge thank you to all who attended, including Amy for running the quiz, Diane for sourcing the venue, our speakers Clair,

Jacqui, Fraser from Aberdeen Airport, CEO Mel and to everyone for being so generous with your donations to the raffle. It was fantastic to see everyone chatting about their dogs and their volunteering experiences and hopefully everyone enjoyed themselves.



Care Home Visits

We visit somewhere in the region of 300 care/nursing homes across Scotland as well as a variety of other assisted living facilities for younger adults, day centres, and sometimes do home visits too. Note these pictures with residents or staff were taken and shared with us by the places we visit.





Top Left: Therapet Harvest & Lesley at the Smile Centre, Broxburn
Top Right: Therapet Lulu & Vittoria at Cranford Care Home, Aberdeen
Bottom Left: Therapet Lilly & Morag at Banff Care Home, Banff
Bottom Right: Therapet Angus with Gordon at Craighead Care home, Newport-on-Tay



Top Left: Therapet Millie & Kirsteen at Annan Court Care Home, Dumfries
Top Right: Therapet Teddy & at Bothwell Castle Care Home, Uddingston
Bottom Left: Therapet Bailey & April at Lorimer House, Edinburgh
Bottom Right: Therapet Vinnie & Lorraine/Kirsty at Highgate Care Home, Uddingston

Edinburgh Social Evening

There was a lovely get together for volunteers in Edinburgh & Lothians at the Delta Marriott Hotel in mid May. Around 35 members attended and enjoyed the opportunity to chat and to have a look at the Therapet merchandise available. CEO Mel gave a short overview of the service, a little history of the origins of the charity, and some updates on areas we are developing. The cakes were delicious and the volunteers appreciated the time to chat and ask questions. Unfortunately, Mel was so busy that no photos were taken but we will rectify this next time! Thanks to the office team for coming along to meet everyone and to all who attended - it was lovely to see everyone.

Fundraising and Donations

As a charity we rely substantially on donations, legacies, 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.

We have a JustGiving page that is accessible from our website and many supporters use this to make donations throughout the year. We are also looking at how we can use QR codes on business cards etc to make donating easier.



Another huge thank you to Maureen Hill from Dumfries & Galloway. Maureen has been a supporter of us for over 20 years, at one time being Area Rep for D&G. Every year she makes dog beds and toys out of fleece and recycled materials. At the end of 2022, she attended lots of Christmas Fayres and small local dog shows and for the first time ever did not have a single bed left. She raised a grand total of £1000 which she kindly donated to us.



Therapets Fitch (pictured), Muppet, and Nelson were the stars of the show at the **Colinton Bowling Club** Cheese and Wine Fundraiser recently. The club raised £400 all of which was donated to us. It looks like everyone enjoyed the wine and the dogs may have even had a bit of cheese!



Canine Crew Therapets Bella and Dorothy, with volunteers Elaine and Carole, attended a ceremony to receive a donation of £1000 from the **Aberdeen Airport Propeller Fund** right at the end of last year. This was held at the Aberdeen Science Centre for all charities that the fund was supporting, and was awarded to us for the outstanding work our Canine Crew has been doing at the airport. Well done everyone!

Sponsors wanted!

Our volunteers do a tremendous amount of work during the year and we would love to recognise that by being able to raise funds to cover some of the costs of our Annual Awards Lunch. Typically, everyone attending pays for their own lunch but it would be lovely if we could reduce such costs as some volunteers travel significant distances to attend. Do you know an individual, group or company that would be interested in sponsoring part of this? The Stirling Court Hotel are giving us use of a conference room free but there are other costs involved. We are still finalising these but would be looking for sponsors for the following:

- Prizes from £15 for a raffle
- One volunteer's lunch at approximately £25
- One night B&B at the Stirling Court Hotel for 1 person £76
- One night B&B at the Stirling Court Hotel for 2 people £89
- One room hire cleaning cost due to multiple dogs £200
- One table of 10 lunches at approximately £250
- A 35th Anniversary cake

We would be happy to advertise any sponsors at the meal and on our social media platforms if that was requested, although we appreciate that some donors wish to remain anonymous. Please contact our CEO, Mel Hughes via our office, or on 07517 363 158 if this is something that you would like to discuss further.

Gentle Reminder

As we have been really busy with events and visits, it is easy to get distracted and forget some of our procedures that need to be in place to ensure we have minimised as much risk as possible and therefore our insurance policy is valid. The four key things we need to remember when on visits with a Therapet:

- One Therapet, one handler so all of your attention is focused on the interaction the dog is having with the person
- Therapet should be on a short, fixed (not extending) lead and under your control at all times
- No taking photographs of anyone we visit - including staff members (even if they say yes!)
- If the Therapet showing signs of fatigue or disinterest, end the visit. We often feel bad if we haven't been able to visit everyone, but visits go at the

pace of the dog - you can always start with the people you didn't see next time.

FAQs

Q: I have two dogs that are registered as Therapets. I would like to take them both together - am I allowed to do this?

A: No. The reason for this is that you need to be completely in control of the one dog in case anything spooks/upsets it. It is not possible to closely monitor two dogs when interacting in close proximity with the public. Some people alternate their dogs between sessions, and others decide to take both but leave one in the car (where safe to do so) or make arrangements to swap them in half way through the session.

Q: The care home staff are really busy and there is no-one available to escort me today. They say it is ok for me to visit people in their rooms or in the garden. Should I go by myself?

A: No. You should always have a member of staff or third party present in the environments we visit. This is to safeguard you as well as the people we visit. In the event of an emergency, you are responsible for you and your Therapet...not other people.

Q: We have been asked to go for a walk with someone. They would like to hold the lead - what should I do?

A: The best thing to do is use two leads; double lead the dog so that you are always holding one lead and therefore the dog is under your control and unlikely to pull suddenly and injure that person. Remember, they do not know your dog and will not know that they might want to chase a squirrel or examine a dropped sweet wrapper. Never give someone you are visiting the lead, unless the dog is double leaded. You can always arrange this for the next time you go - don't be pressured into doing it there and then. Also, remember to always have a third party with you!



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:

Alfie – Susan Rennie's Lhasa Apso

Barney – Helen Jeffrey's Staffie Cross

Cara – Heather McQueen's Spaniel Cross

Cassie – Caroline Ker's Labrador Retriever

Coal – Pauline Millar's Labrador Retriever

Coire – Alison & Eilidh Morgan's Border Terrier

Cookie – Anya Paton's Working Cocker Spaniel

Cora - Allison & George Cruikshanks' Labrador Retriever

Georgie Girl – Margaret Currie's Old English Sheep Dog

Jackson - Deirdre Duncan's Bernese Mountain Dog

Lottie – Elizabeth Brown's Miniature Schnauzer

Mia – Scott & Cameron McEwen's Golden Retriever

Missy – Esther & Peter Davidson's Flat Coated Retriever

Pippin – Stewart & Louise Donald's Bichon Frise

Poppy – Fiona Stalker's Collie

Ralph – Angela McCann's Cockapoo

Robbie – Joan Morrison's Border Terrier

Rosie – Dougie McConnell's Springer Spaniel

Roxy – Christopher Horsburgh & Paula Keir's Black Labrador

Silkie - Tom Ellis' Border Collie x Bearded Collie

Skye – Sharon Fergus's Border Collie

Tia – Julie Thom's Cocker Spaniel

Ziggy - Kerry Robertson & Isabella Craib's Cocker Spaniel

Inspiring Volunteer Awards 2023

Volunteer Edinburgh held an award ceremony on 7th June at Edinburgh City Chambers to recognise contributions volunteers across Edinburgh and Lothians make to the community. We are very pleased to announce that our Area Representative for Edinburgh South, Allison Aspinall, was recognised at the ceremony for all of her efforts supporting our charity. She was presented one of the 42 individual awards by Robert Aldridge, Rt. Hon Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh, and Rebecca Neish, Trustee of Volunteer Edinburgh. Not all nominees were invited to attend the ceremony, so it was a lovely bonus to have her there in person. A very well deserved 'Well done!' Allison, and thank you for all your hard work!

Allison's husband was able to take some photos for us and the official photos will be available on the Volunteer Edinburgh social media feeds next week. Included below is an excerpt from the evening's programme with a summary of some of the activities Allison does, but it omits her work with the the 'Royal Hospital for Children & Young People' in Edinburgh, particularly with the CAMHS unit, and the development and implementation of a new research project in partnership with the University of Edinburgh and the Royal (Dick) Vet School of Veterinary Studies.

Allison Aspinall

Area Representative Edinburgh South,
Canine Concern Scotland Trust (Therapet)

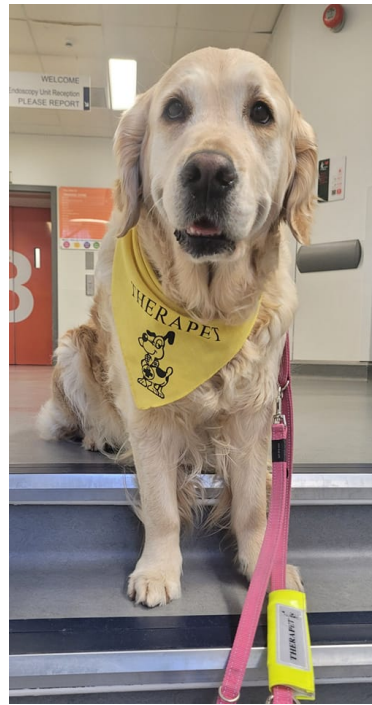
Allison, a dedicated volunteer, started by visiting care homes and the Royal Infirmary with her Therapet, Pepper. She expanded their visits to schools, supporting children with reading and social/emotional issues. Allison took on the role of Area Representative, coordinating volunteers and supporting their journey. Despite personal challenges, she remains committed, organized, and supportive. Allison's strategic thinking and positive attitude recruit new volunteers and improve processes. She mentors young handlers, collaborates with other Area Reps, and initiates partnerships with universities. Her resilience, fundraising efforts, and commitment make her an exceptional volunteer.



'Other' Visits

Our Therapet visits include many NHS premises, day centres, assisted living facilities, learning disability services, prisons, emergency services, Aberdeen Airport, and with many other charities and organisations supporting people in a variety of ways. Here are some more examples of what work has been taking place.



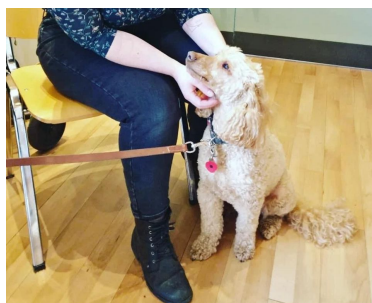


Top Left: Therapet Macy & Lianne, Redburn Ward, Douglas Rehabilitation Unit, Ayrshire Central Hospital, Irvine

Top Right: Therapet Harvey & Lesley, Kilbryde Hospice, East Kilbride

Bottom Left: Therapet Bailey & Hazel, Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice, Glasgow

Bottom Right: Therapet Barley & Jacqui/Colin, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

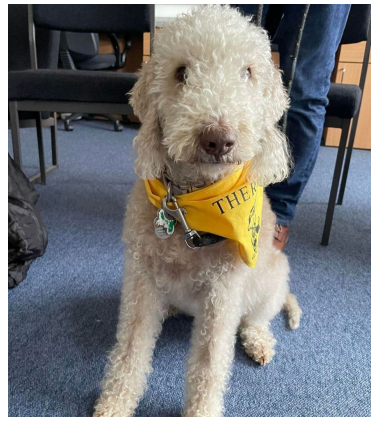


Top Left: Therapet Sylvie & Katrina at the 'Sick Kids', Edinburgh

Top Right: Therapets Leo, Billie-Jean, Hettie with Fiona, Sally, & Alison, Mile End School Holiday Club, Aberdeen

Bottom Left: Therapet Murdo & Jane at the Orwell Centre, Edinburgh

Bottom Right: Therapets Ruby, Tia, Freda & Barnaby with Glen, Christine & Suzanne, Monklands Hospital, Airdrie



Top Left: Therapet Cullen & Emma visiting Brownies, Aberdeenshire

Top Right: Therapet Bramble & Malcolm, (Borders) visiting Biggar High School

Bottom Left: Therapet Harley & Lesley, EK Angels Group, Covey Befriending, Hamilton, South Lanarkshire

Bottom Right: Therapet Daisy & Fiona, PAWS event Aberdeenshire

Paws Against Stress

We have had a huge number of events across the country this year. Our usual visits to Colleges, Universities and schools have taken place supporting students through the term and into their examinations, including a visit to Sgoil Ghaidhlig Ghlaschu. We have also had a massive increase in the number of companies requesting visits from us for staff health and wellbeing sessions.

Our various social media streams contain lots of photos from sessions around the country, and it is a shame we cannot list them all here but they include Aberdeen City Council Children's Services, ABRDN (Aberdeen & Edinburgh branches), Advocates Library (Edinburgh), Aviva (North Lanarkshire), Glasgow Royal Infirmary Emergency Department Staff, IKEA (Glasgow), International SOS (Aberdeen), Monklands General Hospital Staff (North Lanarkshire), Motherwell Police Station, Nike (Livingston), People's Postcode Lottery (Edinburgh), SEC Staff (Glasgow), and Student Employability Hub (Fife).

We have also provided a number of talks around the country to places including Aberdeen Action on Disability Group, Schools, Probus /WRI/Church groups and other organisations.

The photo below is a visit to the Disability & Wellbeing Team at Strathclyde University. Therapets included Bonnie, Baxter, Rudi, and Eila, and their owners Dougie, Elizabeth, Louise & Brett, and Allison.



Pet Health

At this time of year there are always things to be aware of with your pet to help them enjoy the better weather as much as we do. There is plenty of information online and available from your Vet's practice or The Kennel Club about items that may be harmful to your pet, including toxic plants and food, insects and parasites (especially ticks), heat and other related issues.

Please also remember to ensure that, if you have a Therapet, it is up to date with its vaccinations, and undergoes its annual health check. It is important to remind your vet that your pet is a Therapet, and state where they visit, so that your vet may make recommendations about visiting if your pet is presenting with an illness or condition that may affect its visits.



Canine Fertility Clinics

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) together with some respected animal welfare bodies are concerned about the number of canine fertility clinics that have sprung up often in response to the demand for 'designer' puppies during Covid lockdown. While many of these will offer good facilities, others are run by unqualified people with no veterinary oversight and are unregulated. If you are considering using one of these clinics, we suggest you run it past your own vet first so that they can advise on the clinic's qualifications and expertise and whether there is veterinary involvement if, for example, surgical procedures should be required.

Legislation

Unfortunately, the UK government has dropped the Kept Animals Bill. The proposed legislation would have tackled a number of animal welfare issues, including making it illegal to import dogs with cropped ears, creating new powers to prevent puppy smuggling, and banning live exports of horses, cattle, sheep, pigs and goats for slaughter. A real blow for animal welfare.

Reading with Dogs

Demand for us to visit schools is at an all time high. The onset of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns led to an increase or, perhaps more accurately, an increased awareness of, anxiety and mental health concerns, possible gaps in

education/learning, and a perceived lack of social or life skills that include dealing with trauma, grief, stress etc. Our visits to schools encompass many things and often our traditional 'Reading with Dogs' sessions that have been running for 10 years, are also an avenue for supporting children in other areas. We work with children who may struggle to engage with their learning, those who are going through difficulties at home, or those who have learning disabilities and the assistance of our Therapets while they practice their reading makes the whole experience less stressful for them. Whatever the reason we are invited in, you can guarantee that the dogs are making a difference to the lives of those children we meet. We receive positive feedback from schools and here are some of the latest received from schools in Orkney:

"Overall, a really positive experience.....The dogs (and owners) were brilliant"
Kirkwall Grammar School

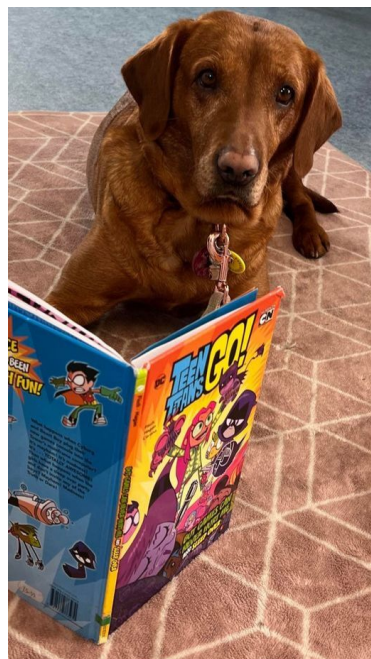
"Most significant development was seen with one P7 boy, who at first would not read out loud at all. By session 3, he was reading confidently out loud for the FIRST time in P7. Our 2 volunteers have been exceptional in every way - both understanding, empathetic and willing to adapt, sometimes at the very last minute. We can't thank them enough".
Papdale Grammar School

Top Left: Therapet Burli & Sandra at Albyn School, Aberdeen

Top Right: Therapet Cody & Diane at Duloch Primary, Dunfermline

Bottom Left: Therapet Corrib & Catherine at St Anthony's Primary, Johnstone

Bottom Right: Therapet Ember & Pauline at Lybster Primary, Caithness

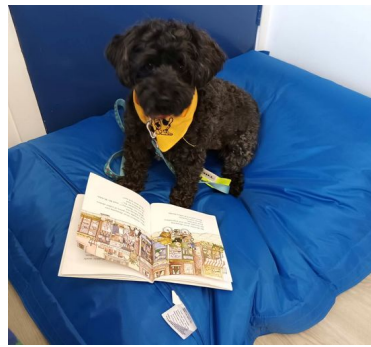


Top Left: Therapet Dexter & Isabella at Avenue End Primary, Glasgow

Top Right: Therapet Cody & Caroline at Barsail School, Erskine

Bottom Left: Therapet Seamus & Mary Clare at Sciennes Primary, Edinburgh

Bottom Right: Therapet Ralph & Gillian at Inverkeithing High School, Fife



Top: Therapet Maggie & Alison, East Craigs Primary, Edinburgh

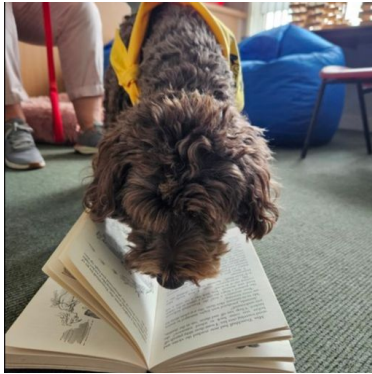
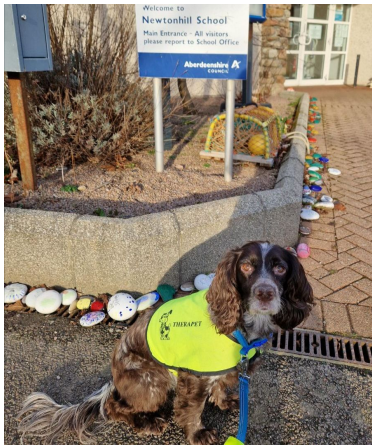
Mid Left: Therapet Fern & Jaqui, Newtonhill Primary Nursery, Aberdeen

Mid Right: Therapet Dexter & Janice, Falkirk High School, Falkirk

Bottom Left: Therapet Eila & Allison, Colquhoun Park Primary, Bearsden

Bottom Right: Therapet Logan & Sheila, Dunfermline Carnegie Library & Galleries





Top Left: Therapet Molly & Angela at Giffnock Primary, Glasgow
Top Right: Therapet Twigg & Hazel at Dalmarnock Primary, Glasgow
Bottom Left: Therapet Rona & Moira at Levensvale Primary, Alexandria
Bottom Right: Therapet Riley & Sarah at James Gillespie's, Edinburgh



Scottish Kennel Club Show May 2023

As usual, we had a presence with our marquee in the trade stand area at the SKC Championship Show from 19th - 21st May at the Royal Highland Centre, Edinburgh. We had a huge number of volunteers turn up, either to support us on the stand recruiting new volunteers, or to drop in and say hello as they had travelled from afar including Aberdeenshire, Dumfries & Galloway, Perth & Kinross, South Lanarkshire, and the Highlands.

We had too many people attend to include photos here but you will find them on our social media sites (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). We did have one special visitor, Dave, who, at the grand age of 101 years, was attending his first SKC Championship Show. He absolutely loved it and hopes to visit the next one at the end of September, shortly after his 102nd birthday!



Volunteer Opportunities

We need volunteers...whether you have a dog, cat or would like to help out in any way. If you have friends or associates who would be interested in any of the following, please do get in touch.

Volunteers with dogs needed around several areas including the North of Scotland; Inverness and the Highlands, up the NE coast north of Peterhead, Caithness & Sutherland, and Orkney.

Volunteers without dogs - Supervising and/or organising events like PAWS Against Stress, helping to put together our newsletter, scanning/shredding/filing in our office in Leith, sourcing placements for our volunteers, supporting or buddying new volunteers through their initial visits, developing new resources such as posters or fliers, getting high quality photos for our new website and social media, organising our social events such as regional get togethers (i.e. coffee, walks) or helping to organise our Awards Lunch & Ceremony.

Some of these are specific to regions where we need to either support the Area Reps already in place, or to help us in areas where we don't have an Area Rep at present.

A huge thank you to those who have already offered support in specific areas. We now have Malcolm Mullarkey in the **Borders** supporting Marion Livingston, particularly around Peebles. In **South Lanarkshire**, Lesley Johnston has joined the team to help Lorna Ravell with assessments. In **Aberdeen**, James Allan has offered his expertise in Marketing and sourcing of new merchandise.

Volunteer Recognition

At the end of National Volunteer Week, we would like to thank everyone for volunteering with us. Did you know that when you reach certain milestones of continuous efforts volunteering with us, these are recognised in the following ways:

- 3-Years: Certificate of Appreciation

- 5-Years: Father Jim Peat Memorial Medal
- 10-Years: Marjorie Henley Price Memorial Medal
- 20-Years: A beautiful engraved crystal vase

Here are some comments regarding recent recipients:

"On behalf of Therapet Billie Jean and myself, I want to thank you for sending us the Father Jim Peat 5 year medal. I knew Father Jim well in his pre-ordination days at the SKC and I was sad when I heard of his death. What a nice way to preserve his memory.

Billie Jean is a busy Therapet and particularly enjoys working with children. Because she is so small (3 kg) she is seldom seen as scary even by very small children and those who are afraid of dogs. Being rather old (87), my mobility is somewhat limited, but thanks to the kindness of Fiona Watts, Billie and I can still attend PAWS and other useful visits."

Sally Leiper (left) is a long term supporter who has had multiple Therapets, and lives in Aberdeenshire



SRUC Barony Campus posted this about Therapet Poppy who also recently achieved her 5-Year Medal:

"Poppy is a 7 year old spaniel and is our SRUC Barony and Ayr Therapet. She has just achieved a medal for 5 whole years worth of Therapet service to the students (and staff!) And what a fine job she does of it!"

Poppy and her owner Joy are from Girvan, Ayrshire and have been visiting both SRUC Barony in Dumfries and the SRUC campus in Ayr on a regular basis.

Young Ambassadors

Last year, a young team of S2 pupils from Bertha Park School in Perth won their Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) competition which "is a powerful active citizenship programme, empowering young people to make a difference in their communities while developing a range of skills". They chose to represent us and as a result of them winning, we were awarded £3000 by The Wood Foundation.

One of the YPI group, Kaiya-Charlie Curran, and another of her classmates, Hazel Love, wanted to take this further as their school had experienced the very sudden loss of a pupil last year and they could see the effect that dogs had on helping improve mental health. So they asked if we could develop a Young Ambassador's Programme where they would learn how to handle a Therapet and undertake visits. Over the course of the last year, they have been working closely with our CEO, Mel, learning to work with her Therapet, Ollie the Rough Collie. They have studied our 'Children and Dogs' materials, learning how to present them to primary aged children. They wrote to all of the feeder primary schools, made a presentation to a group of Headteachers, liaised with them and their own teachers about time out of school, and over the last month have visited seven different primary schools with Mel and Ollie.



The transformation of these two young ladies has been amazing to see over the last year. Now aged 15 years and just entering S4, their confidence has blossomed. Hazel has struggled to attend many of her classes, but she has never missed a session, and is always fantastic with the younger children. Kaiya is organised, calm and keen to be a Primary School teacher when older so this has been an amazing experience for her. They have really strengthened their communication skills - making presentations, speaking to groups ranging in size from 4 or 5 people to 50 pupils. They are confident about presenting our film and explaining to the younger pupils about how to look after their own pets

safely, as well as how to behave in a safe manner around unknown dogs. They have learned how to organise their time, manage younger children, look after Ollie in different environments and it has been a very rewarding experience for them. They also had experience of a 'Reading with Dogs' session. Not to mention Ollie has always been very pleased to see them!

We are hopeful that Hazel and Kaiya will also be able to achieve a Personal Achievement Award in school for their efforts, and depending on their studies next year, both girls would like to work more with their own age group to support them through their first examination year.



Please remember to send us articles and photographs for our next newsletter in Autumn/Winter. Deadline for these is 1st September 2023.



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