



## Bulletin No. 101 April 2021

Dear Members, Volunteers, Therapets and Friends

Hope you are all well and enjoying slightly warmer weather. We also hope that many of you have now been vaccinated and are enjoying the slight relaxation of lockdown rules. There is a lot of information out there and it can be confusing at times, so, to clarify where we are in terms of our Therapet visits, please read on.

### **Our Pathway to Therapet Visiting Service Resumption**

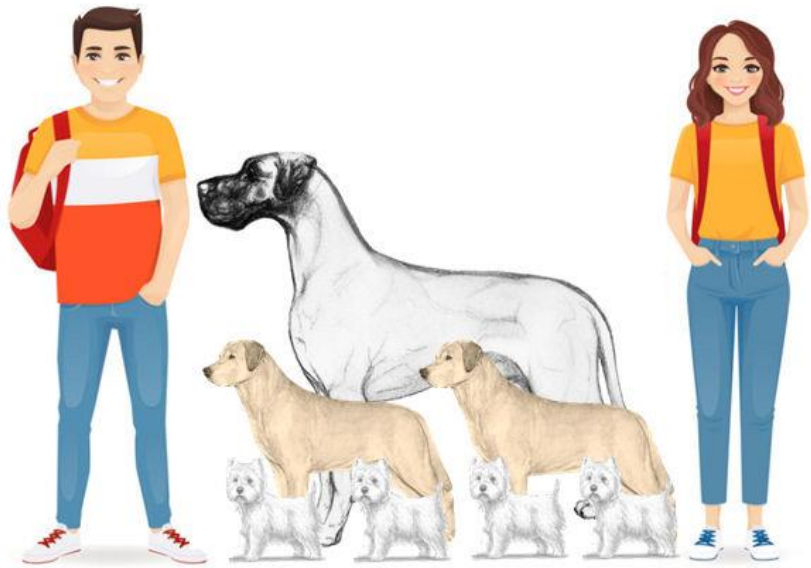
Although there has been a significant relaxation of lockdown measures, particularly from 26th April, until the social distancing rules have been relaxed further, there will still be:

- No outdoor visits - including walks or visits to gardens,
- No visits to primary or secondary schools
- No visits to care homes, residential units, day centres or other similar facilities
- No visits to hospitals, prisons, or emergency services
- No visits to colleges, universities, or other places of learning
- No face-to-face talks or presentations
- No dog or cat assessments

As clearer government guidelines are put in place for work such as ours, the Board will review this and put in place the next steps of our pathway, the first of which will be outdoor visiting. We will keep you updated when we are ready to move to this step. We are trying to be as clear as possible as there is so much confusion with what we can and can't do with the release of lockdown!

A key reason for waiting a little longer before we resume services is social distancing. It is our policy to have our dog on a short lead and fully under our control; if it is 2metres away, are we fully in control of them and is our dog safe? The image below demonstrates how far 2 metres is in 'dog size'.

# SOCIAL DISTANCING



**DISTANCE FROM OTHERS USING THE 2 METRE RULE**

**OR in dog terms that we all understand**

**ONE Great Dane, TWO Labradors or FOUR West Highland White Terriers**

## **What you can do:**

- online/virtual. 'Paws Against Stress'
- online/virtual. 'Reading with Dogs'
- online/virtual educational visits
- online/virtual talks and training about our charity and the services we provide.

To coin a phrase, patience is a virtue; and we don't want to rush back into visiting until the effect of this lockdown release is clearer. After a year of uncertainty, another few months of caution will do no harm and will allow for many volunteers to be fully vaccinated.

In the meantime, stay in touch, enjoy this latest edition of the newsletter and send in any interesting articles that you might have for the next one!

Take care everyone

Mel Hughes  
CEO

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## **News from the Trustee Directors**

Our Board meeting was held virtually on 18th April. At this, our Annual Report and Accounts were approved and are now being signed off by relevant parties. These will be published on our website in May and may be found under the News/Events menu.

### **Honorary Life President**

As we mentioned in our January News, George Leslie retired as one of our Trustees last year. In recognition of over 30 years of service to the charity, we have invited him to become a Life President, which he has duly accepted. We are very thankful to George for all the work that he has done supporting us over the years and extremely happy that he remains part of our organisation.

### **The Scottish Kennel Club Shows**

The annual shows that usually take place in May and August have been postponed once again. The Scottish Kennel Club is planning to hold these in one event at the end of September/beginning of October, and all being well, we hope to have our usual stand there.

### **Annual Awards Lunch 2021**

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing situation with the pandemic, we have decided to postpone this once again and will rebook for November 2022.

### **School Dogs**

Due to an alarming increase in staff members taking their own dogs and young puppies into schools, we have written to the 32 Scottish Council Education Authorities, Education Scotland, and the Independent/Private Schools to inform them about potential issues with the pup/dog's health, responsibility and duty of care, and the impact these may have on Public Liability Insurance. We have received feedback from some councils to say they were pushing this information through to their schools.

At the same time, The Kennel Club has noticed this is becoming a UK-wide trend and is developing a press release and materials to strongly recommend this does not continue. Discussion has taken place regarding the need for legislation in this area. In a meeting that Mel attended on 26th April, all the organisations that attended that follow The Kennel Club 'Bark and Read' standards indicated that they would not be resuming physical visits to schools until September 2021 at the earliest due to the pandemic.

## Long Service Awards - 20 Years!

Congratulations and a huge thank you to Diane Wood and Jean Coke for their dedication to continuous volunteering with us for a period of over 20 years. The ladies should have received their award at our 2020 Award Ceremony, however since we had to cancel, we will make arrangements to get their engraved crystal vases safely to them!

Jean has been an active member in and around the Onich and Fort William area, flying the flag for us in a region where volunteer numbers are relatively low. Jean's current Therapet, Cassie the Labrador Retriever, has been registered since January 2013.

Diane has been a volunteer, Area Representative (initially in Inverness) and sits on our Board of Directors. She is one of the dynamic team in Aberdeenshire and was instrumental in getting the Canine Crew established at Aberdeen Airport. She was also involved in the remake of our educational film 'Children and Dogs'. Diane currently has two Therapets; Breagh the Golden Retriever, and Naso, the Italian Segugio. Diane's son is also a Therapet volunteer.

## Membership Renewal 2021

Following January's bulletin, the membership renewals were sent out via email or by post to those who requested it. Thank you to those of you who have returned these to us. If you have yet to renew your membership, please get in touch and we will get this processed.

The 2021 Annual Membership fees are:

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

The Therapet Registration fee is a one-off payment of £5. 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 or vet practices, that are interested in our work and wish to support us, but they usually do not have active volunteers with us.*

*Did You Know?*

April 2021 was Canine Concern Scotland Trust's 33rd Anniversary! Happy Birthday to us!

## Spring Hazards for your Pets

Spring is the time when adders, the only poisonous snakes in Scotland, are at their most active. With the recent relaxation of Covid restrictions, many people will be venturing into the countryside with their dogs, so it is important to be aware of possible **adder bites**. However, adders will only bite in self-defence, or if they are accidentally stood upon so cases of adders biting dogs are not that common. This link gives useful information about adder bites and what you should do if you think your dog has been bitten.

[Adder bites in dogs: What to do if your dog is bitten by an adder | Vets Now \(vets-now.com\)](https://www.vets-now.com)



What is much more common as the temperature warms up are **tick bites**. Ticks can carry the organism that causes Lyme Disease in animals and humans. Of course, as Therapet owners, you will be adhering to the Health Protocol by having your dogs on external parasite and worming prevention programmes. However, there are many new and advanced products on the market now, and it may be advisable to contact your veterinary practice to get the most up-to-date advice. In addition to this, you should check your dogs for the presence of ticks after walks in tick habitats such as long grass and remove them. If you are unsure how to do this, veterinary nurses at your local practice will show you how and will be able to supply a small and inexpensive tool to aid this. The same applies to yourself of course.

## 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:

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### **Basil, Border Collie, owned by Pat Doran, Perthshire**

Basil had been a Therapet since April 2007. He was a massive dog who leaned

into people wanting them to pat him - a natural born Therapet! Sadly, Basil suffered from multiple strokes and his health deteriorated. Basil lived with Bella and new puppy Benji who he was 'training' to behave properly.

**Bertie, Bichon Frise, owned by Angela Honthy, Glasgow & Strathclyde**

Bertie registered as a Therapet in May 2019 at the grand age of 11 years old. He visited the Prince & Princess of Wales Hospice, Glasgow, providing comfort to residents, staff, and family members in the evenings. He is sadly missed.

**Bob, Labrador Retriever, owned by Dawn Clough, Borders**

Bob registered as a Therapet in February 2016 along with his 'brother' Coop. He visited Lennel House Care Home in Coldstream where he was very much welcomed and retired in 2020. Dawn is hoping to get another 'career change' guide dog to keep Coop company as he is missing Bob.

**Brakken, Golden Retriever, owned by Colin & Jacqui Finnie, Aberdeenshire**

Brakken registered as a Therapet in 2010 and died in 2019. During her time as a Therapet she visited Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. Her three housemates Bronte, Bentley and Barley continue in their Therapet work at the hospital and as part of the Canine Crew at Aberdeen Airport.

**Bruiser, Collie/Terrier Cross, owned by Isabel McFarlane, Aberdeenshire**

Bruiser had been a Therapet since January 2019. He visited wards 204 and 205 at the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary which he loved. He was fit and sprightly at 14 years old and had been unwell for a couple of months with an aggressive adenocarcinoma.

**Dougal, Labradoodle, owned by Amanda Powe, Aberdeen**

Dougal had been a Therapet since January 2019. He visited Morningfield House at Woodend Hospital. He was sadly killed in a tragic accident and our thoughts are with Amanda and family.

**Dougal, Australian Labradoodle, owned by Carol Baird, Stirlingshire**

Dougal registered as a Therapet in June 2019. He was a young dog but sadly developed cancer in his shoulder. He had been very aware of people who were ill or upset and was excellent at providing comfort to those who needed it.

**Ella, Jack Russell, owned by Sheena Winton, Edinburgh**

Ella registered as a Therapet in June 2018. She used to visit Finlay House; part of the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Community Hospital network, Sheena was missing Ella so much she has a new dog that she hopes will be Therapet material.

**Hugh, Labrador Retriever, owned by Fiona Gordon, Aberdeen**

Hugh had a short-lived Therapet career, registering in November 2019. He visited Gairloch Nursing Home and The Richmond Trust before lockdown but sadly died of cancer. He is missed by housemate 'Boo' who will continue as a Therapet.

**Jackson, Black Labrador Retriever, owned by Sheila Warnock, Edinburgh**

Jackson registered as a Therapet in January 2019. He visited Eagle Lodge Care Home in Ferry Road weekly and participated in several corporate 'Paws Against Stress' sessions prior to the pandemic. He also took part in our Therapet NC500 Virtual Walk which he loved.

**Kara, Golden Retriever, owned by Margaret Pratt, Orkney**

Kara had been a Therapet since August 2015. She was a brilliant dog with primary school children and enjoyed visiting Papdale Primary School, Kirkwall Grammar School and Gilbertson Day Centre. She died after a sudden, short illness and the children she used to visit will all miss her.

**Kizzy, Labrador Retriever, owned by Jacqueline Harkness, Edinburgh**

Kizzy registered as a Therapet in January 2020 so was sadly unable to truly experience the joy of being a Therapet due to lockdown. She was fit and well with a trip up into the hills the day before but suddenly collapsed and was found to have tumours on her lung.

**Lester, Golden Retriever, owned by Fiona Redford, Aberdeenshire**

Lester had a short career as a Therapet, registering in November 2019. He was learning the ropes from housemate Mannie who has been a Therapet since 2014 and was one of two Runners Up for Therapet of the Year 2019. Lester was visiting care homes in the Peterhead area.

**Mac, Labrador Retriever, owned by Margaret & Alasdair McVitie, Borders**

Mac had been a Therapet since June 2018. He visited the Royal Voluntary Service, Galashiels where his visits were much loved. Despite a traumatic start to life, and some health issues, he had a fantastic few years with his owners and his visits will be missed.

**Mila, Dogue De Bordeaux, owned by Karen Forgie, Edinburgh**

Mila registered as a Therapet in February 2016. She loved going to visit patients at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and was a great ambassador for bigger dogs and showing how gentle they can be.

### **Minnie, Border Terrier, owned by Jan Ramsay, Edinburgh**

Minnie's registered as a Therapet in January 2014. She had been very active, particularly in 'Paws Against Stress' sessions at Heriot Watt University and the week before she died at the age of 15, was happily engaged in a virtual call with family members in care. Although Minnie retired in early 2019, Jan continued to organise and supervise the sessions at Heriot Watt for a year.

### **Skye, Cocker Spaniel, Calum Cowan, Edinburgh**

Skye had been a Therapet since 2016 so just received her five-year medal. She loved undertaking a variety of visits over that time, including to the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, 'Reading With Dogs' at Gylemuir Primary School, working with CAMHS services for children and 'Paws Against Stress' sessions at Heriot Watt University. She loved a frozen Kong treat and is sadly missed.

### **Veda, Labrador Retriever, owned by Bill Macdonald, West Lothian**

Her career as a guide dog didn't come to fruition, so Veda became a Therapet in 2015. She undertook countless visits to schools for 'Reading With Dogs', colleges and universities for 'Paws Against Stress', the Sundach Centre and wards, including the Children's Ward at St. John's Hospital in Livingston. Over the last two years, Veda lost one eye to Glaucoma and was almost completely blind. As an Area Rep's dog, she was also instrumental in 'showing the ropes' to so many others new to the Therapet service.

Apologies if we have missed any Therapet. Please do let us know and we will give them a mention in our next newsletter. If your Therapet has recently passed away, please contact the office and let them know whether 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.

## **Virtual 'Paws Against Stress'**

We are seeing an increase in requests for virtual sessions, particularly with the colleges and universities as they reach exam time. During April/May, we are running sessions for City of Glasgow College, Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow University SRUC, Napier University Student Accommodation, and the University of the West of Scotland.

We have also had requests from other organisations and recently ran a session with Berwickshire Housing Association Befrienders in the Borders. We will be running a session for Cornerstone staff located throughout Scotland in May. Please let us know if you would like to participate in virtual sessions.



*Did You Know?*

We still have a number of long-serving volunteers who were with us in 1988.

## Life of a Therapet during Lockdown - helping anxious children virtually!

By Moira Macpherson and Therapet Jessie, the Cockapoo

Although having plenty of walks, Jessie the cockapoo was missing her weekly visits to the local Primary Schools in Fife. She was so excited when Kelty Primary School got in touch asking her to work with some Primary 1 children, that she ran to get her mask. I had to explain that she wouldn't need a mask as she would be meeting the children online.



She has now had several sessions with the children, using Microsoft Teams, either one to one, or in small groups. The children appear to enjoy chatting away to her, telling her about their pets or asking her questions. I must admit it takes titbits of cheese and chicken to encourage Jessie to sit in front of the laptop for any length of time. She also enjoys finding her toys that I have hidden in the room; the children think that is especially good fun.

The headteacher had hoped that these sessions would help some pupils who were having difficulty settling back into school. Here is a quote from a thank you email after the last session 'the kids gained so much from it. They are all having such wobbles returning to school and connecting with you and Jessie really helped'. In addition, the Deputy Headteacher stated, "From our



Jessie at the laptop

perspective, the Therapets initiative has really supported some of our young people who have found returning to school more challenging, especially separating from their parents after spending a prolonged period of time at home. Communicating with Jessie has not only been a real highlight of the week but has provided a platform to talk about how the children are feeling. Huge thanks to Moira and Jessie for taking the time to support us."

OBJECTIVE ACHIEVED, that's why I love being Jessie's owner.

## Canine Cottages 'Canine Critic' Award



Therapet Yogi, the Newfoundland, from Aberdeenshire is one of 10 winners in the Canine Critic 2020 Awards. These are awarded by Canine Cottages who look for dogs and their owners to review some of the best dog-friendly accommodation, most exciting days out and interesting dog walks that the UK has to offer". There were over 62,000 entrants across the UK and Yogi won 'The Hero' award for his varied

activities as a Therapet, as a water rescue dog and with his dad's business helping children with disabilities or making people work out at their fitness training sessions. Owners Rachel and Norman McConnachie are very excited about Yogi's 'new found' fame (pun intended!) and Yogi is such a character he gets lots of attention wherever he goes. Well done, Yogi.

## Caring Collie!

Jess the Border Collie whose photograph appeared in the International Sheep Dog Society (ISDS) Calendar a few years ago, is as multi-talented as owner Susan Ross' previous dogs. From a long generation of working sheepdogs, Jess is intuitive to the needs of her friend, Mia, who has Angelman



Syndrome, which is a genetic condition that affects the nervous system and causes severe physical and learning difficulties. Prior to lockdown, Jess and her son Tweed were accompanying Mia, who is like family to them, on regular outings. It is quite clear from the photograph below that Mia enjoys their company as she has a huge smile on her face!

Owner, Susan, from Helensburgh, has been a member with us since the early 1990s and has had an equally long relationship with ISDS and working dogs. Three of Susan's previous dogs were Therapet of the Year in 2000 and were media stars in several tv events. Susan has a wealth of lovely memories and tales of her amazing experiences with her Therapets over the years. If you have similar stories to share, please send them to us.

# Ode to Smiddybrae

For four plus years we've gone all the way,  
To see our friends at Smiddybrae.  
But then one day without a warning,  
Our visits stopped one strange dark morning.

We couldn't think what we had done,  
Had we been bad or hurt someone?  
Then we heard there was a virus,  
That was not nice, and could even kill us.

So everyone was staying at home,  
No more day centre or cause to roam.  
No more hoovering the day room floor,  
Or chews from Vera, what a bore.

No cuddles from Emma or biscuits from Cath,  
How long is this caper going to last?  
We miss our friends, it's just not fair,  
Let's hope they're well and taking care.

No chats with Ruth and Kirsten too,  
Just don't know what we're going to do.  
The weeks are long and really boring,  
Everyone there is so adoring.

So let's just hope this virus ends,  
And we get back to all our friends.  
And see the rainbow high above,  
Bringing joy and peace and love.

And when this lockdown finally ends,  
And we're allowed to see our friends.  
We'll gather back at Smiddybrae,  
And raise a glass to a brighter day.  
Woof Woof.



Barbara Todd from Orkney wrote this poem in June last year about her visits to a local day centre for the elderly. Her dogs Alfie, a Collie, and Josh, an English Springer Spaniel, are both now 14 years old and have decided to retire from their Therapet role, particularly since Alfie now has 'doggy dementia' and tends to wander off.



Our 'Canine Crew' at Aberdeen Airport turns 2 this month!

## Informative Talks

In March, we held the first of our virtual talks for volunteers and interested members. Therapet volunteer Fiona Tulley from Perthshire was our first guest speaker who gave an overview of 'Understanding Behaviour in Children with Additional Support Needs'. Fiona is an Early Years Inclusion Teacher for Perth and Kinross Council but as a volunteer used to doing Therapet visits herself was able to give us some excellent pointers in how to make our visits to schools more effective.

In April, Edinburgh College staff Jenni Moreland, (Student Wellbeing Lead), and Steven Craig, (Transition Support Team Leader, Access and Continuing Education), spoke about how our Therapet sessions benefit students. They gave an overview of our work with the college's four campuses, explaining the issues students face, and some top tips on what to expect during a visit. Both talks were exceptionally well received, and the presenters were very appreciative of the feedback. Our May talk will be on visiting secure units including prisons, secure wards and hospitals.

Future talks will include:

- Therapet visiting for new volunteers.
- What to expect when visiting a school for the first time
- Sanitisation - top tips on hand hygiene for visiting from an expert in the field.
- Confidentiality when volunteering
- Dementia awareness

We will either record the talk or make summary notes depending on the choice of the presenter so if you are unable to attend a talk but would like the notes or to listen to the recording, please let us know.

# Volunteer Coordination Roles

## 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. Please email Mel on [mel.hughes@canineconcernscotland.org.uk](mailto:mel.hughes@canineconcernscotland.org.uk) if you would like to know more about any of these positions.

- Dumfries & Galloway - someone from the west of the area to assist with the work,
- Edinburgh West Area Representative
- Perthshire Area Representative
- West Lothian Area Representative

## Fundraising and Donations

There are so many ways that supporters have raised money for us these last few months. Thank you all so much for your support. Here are just a few examples.

### Membership Renewal

*"Thanks it's a pleasure that being associated with a charity like CC is filling a big gap in our society amongst the homes, hospices, schools, hospitals etc. Very worthy charity to support as long as Rory and I can keep fulfilling our membership."*

Jack Johnston & Rory, Ayrshire

### Christmas Sale

Long standing volunteer and retired Area Representative for Dumfries, Maureen Hill, raised £400 for us over Christmas by making and selling Christmas crackers and dog treat gifts. Maureen is very creative and has raised lots of money over the years from sales of dog beds/blankets. Thanks once again Maureen!

### Kiltwalk

Each year, people undertake a variety of sponsored events in our name. We know someone has participated in the recent Kiltwalk but we are yet to find out their name! Thank you whoever you are!

## Find us online:

### Facebook



<https://facebook.com/CanineConcernScotlandTrust>

<https://facebook.com/TherapetsScotland>

### Twitter



<https://twitter.com/CanineConcern>

### Instagram



<https://instagram.com/therapetcst/>