



Bulletin No 98 April 2020

Dear Members, Volunteers and Therapets

Well this has certainly been an unusual start to the year and as I write this, we are now in our 32nd year of the charity's operation. I had a busy first two months as CEO attending events and supporting volunteers all over the country. I reviewed the 2019 figures for 'Paws against Stress' and 'Reading with Dogs' sent in from around the country to find we had an increase in the provision of our events as well as an increase in the number of our new volunteers compared to 2018. Then suddenly we were hit with this 'hibernation' phase. The outbreak of the Coronavirus, Covid 19 has had such a major impact on all our lives and we are all surely aware of people we know who have been affected. Although we are currently unable to offer our Therapet visiting service, there will likely be a demand moving forward as we are called upon to assist with the mental and physical well-being of people we are able to support. This may not be for some time yet and may take on a different form from that we are used to, but we all know and understand the benefits of animals in maintaining our health. This is a difficult time as we recognise that many people are under prolonged periods of stress and this is usually when our Therapet services would be of most use. Many of us will be desperate to provide support to key workers, particularly in the healthcare sector. However, we simply must put our own health first and comply with the guidelines, ensuring we stay at home and are fit and well enough to visit once our services have been reinstated. Those of us with our own pets are extremely fortunate during this time to have the love of our cherished companions and I know my own Therapet, Ollie the Rough Collie, is enjoying the extra time with me and my other pets but missing the interaction with other people.



We will keep you informed as to when our services will be resuming so please monitor our website and social media for news of this. Once lock down has been lifted, visits should not resume until we have made an announcement to that effect. This is important for insurance reasons. In the meantime, we will continue to keep in touch with you through our newsletters and social media. Our office is currently closed so we are unable to access our usual resources and both Norma and Carole are at home. We are not monitoring the phones; however, Lesley continues to monitor the office email from a laptop at home and is working on updating documents and ensuring that our records reflect the GDPR requirements for holding data. If anyone does need someone to talk to, if you are feeling isolated or struggling with being at home or simply want to chat about how things are going, please don't hesitate to email and we will set up a time to call, or contact me directly on my mobile 07517 363158. We will be

happy to have a 'virtual coffee' and a chat with you on the phone or through a video chat and can involve more than one person if required to keep us all connected.

This newsletter is different from previous ones so if we miss anything, my sincere apologies and we will try to include it on social media or in our August newsletter. We would like to share some of the news that we have of volunteers staying active and in touch during the lock down as well as other updates since our January newsletter.

I sincerely hope that you, your family, and friends and your Therapets are staying fit and well and we can look forward to providing our wonderful service once the virus is more under control. To those of you who are key workers, thank you for everything you are doing and thanks to us all for staying home and doing our bit to protect each other. I am sure those that are able are doing as much as possible within our own communities to support those in need.

I look forward to seeing your Therapets in action again soon!

Mel Hughes
CEO



News from the Trustees

The regular April meeting of Trustees was held via conference call on 19th April 2020. During this, our **Annual Report and Accounts for 2019** were approved. These will be available on the website shortly under the 'News/Events' menu. If you hover your mouse over this menu and scroll down to the 'Report and Accounts' section, they will be listed there. We have to say a huge thank you to everyone who has contributed and continues to contribute to our funds, which are raised through our membership fees, individual donations, corporate donations and generous donations from many Charitable Trusts and Foundations who have helped sponsor projects such as the filming of 'Children and Dogs', funding banners and equipment and generally covering our administrative costs.

The Chairman paid tribute to Mr Douglas Ruthven and Dr Val Marrian, both of whom had intimated their desire to retire. He thanked them both for their long, dedicated, and valuable service as Trustees. Val is a retired Consultant Paediatrician and Senior Lecturer in Child Health with a lifelong interest in animals. She is currently Vice President of the Scottish Kennel Club and has a passion for agility. Her advice on matters concerning health and education has been vital in making many key decisions to develop our work with children over the years. Douglas joined the charity in 1998 and was instrumental in implementing and developing our services in the Edinburgh and Lothians region which he coordinated for 16 years. He was also

at the forefront of the Trust's work on dog phobia. In 2017, Douglas was awarded the British Empire Medal "For voluntary service to the community in Edinburgh and the Lothians".

We will potentially be looking for a Trustee with medical experience to join our Board and are particularly keen to hear from any of our interested members or dog-loving associates.

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. This year, we have sadly said goodbye to the following Therapets:

- Ailsa, Golden Retriever, owned by Pat Jack
- Brewster, Chocolate Labrador, owned by Pauline Fraser
- Cody, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, owned by Lisa Riddell
- Flirt, Miniature Schnauzer, owned by June Jeffrey
- Lucy, Working Cocker Spaniel, owned by Edith Stenbridge
- Maisie, Border/Lakeland Terrier, owned by Lesley and Libby Milton
- Mercy, Lhasa Apso, owned by Susan Edwards
- Michael, Deerhound, owned by Carole Ledingham
- Milo, Boxer, owned by Rosemary Noble
- Nell, Border Collie, owned by Jann Heigh
- Sara, Irish Setter, owned by Norma Patterson
- Shadow, Saluki Lurcher Cross, owned by Bryan Robertson
- Tigger, Miniature Poodle, owned by Jane Burleigh

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

Area Representative

We are delighted to welcome Ian Napier as our new Area Representative for Edinburgh North West. Ian and his Golden Retriever, Bruce, have been members with us for three years and particularly enjoy visiting schools. Ian replaces Derek Muir who has retired. We would like to thank Derek for his work and know that Ian will step into the role enthusiastically, once services resume. Ian's contact details are now on our website in the drop-down menu 'About' under 'Area Representatives'.

Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Edinburgh

Allison Aspinall has taken over from Jane Burleigh as coordinator of the volunteer rota for the 'Sick Kids' as of April 2020. This is a role that Jane has filled for some time and she has gained almost as much pleasure from her visits as the children that are visited. Sadly, Jane recently lost her Therapet Tigger who adored his visits with the children. Thank you, Jane, for all your work and we look forward to seeing you and Murdo at other Therapet events. Allison is currently Area Representative for Edinburgh South and the hospital falls into her

region and will do after it has moved to its new premises soon. Thank you, Allison, and good luck!

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
- East Kilbride & South Lanarkshire Area Representative to replace John Kerr who is retiring.
- Edinburgh West Area Representative
- Coordinator for 'Paws against Stress' at Heriot Watt and Napier Universities in Edinburgh
- Perthshire Area Representative

Dog Phobic Work

Therapist Maisie the Miniature Schnauzer has successfully assisted a child with dog phobia in Edinburgh. Volunteer Alison Wilson says that Maisie's lovely calm temperament has also helped another child with mental health issues. Maisie has been a regular visitor to a care home in Edinburgh for over two years and participates in other larger Therapist group events. This has included an exceptionally well received visit to the law firm Burness Paul in Edinburgh where staff said it was "one of the happiest days we have had in the office". She is also hoping to be included in a research study being undertaken by students at the University of Edinburgh and a future visit to the Scottish Parliament in support of mental health. Both to be scheduled when lockdown is lifted!



NHS Tayside

In January, we signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with NHS Tayside, effectively allowing us to provide our volunteer services to all NHS premises throughout Dundee & Angus and Perth & Kinross. Prior to the situation with the Coronavirus, we were able to visit Ninewells Hospital in Dundee and had five volunteers set to visit on a regular basis.

Once our services resume and the care facilities are happy to have us back in, all institutions, wards, clinical staff requesting our services will approach their volunteer manager/coordinator, not our Therapist volunteers. The NHS volunteer coordinator will then contact our relevant Area Representative to arrange Therapist visits. If you are



contacted and it is not by your Area Representative, please do get in touch with your Area Representative so they may coordinate services effectively.

From NHS Tayside Spectra Circular March 2020: Patients at Ninewells were also treated to a visit from Therapet Odi as part of the CAPA project. This was Odi's first visit to the hospital and his owner Jim plans to make it a regular occurrence. Senior charge nurse in ward 6 Nicki Hedley said, "It was great to see the patients' faces light up when they met Odi. It makes such a difference to them to have activities like this – they were speaking about it all day."

Tribute

An article from volunteer Vivien Moen about Therapet Bella, the Lhasa Apso, who lost the ability to walk, sensation in her tail and had back pain.

"This is a big thank you for all the staff concerned with taking care of Bella, at the Small Animal Hospital, University of Glasgow Veterinary School, especially Doctor Adriana Kaczmarek whom we saw on arrival. She was equally caring and gentle with Bella as she was with her very shocked owner and quickly confirmed an MRI scan was needed and almost certainly surgery that evening. I was kept updated during the journey home and later that the surgery had been successful for Intervertebral Disc Extrusion L4-L5. During the following week "Ada" as she called herself personally rang every day with a comprehensive update on Bella's condition and progress. I saw her a week later when collecting Bella and she talked me through the scan, her future medication and care, all backed up in writing. Obviously there had been many others caring and looking after Bella, plus some physiotherapy but the whole set up was very caring, especially the reception staff and professionals.

Also a vote of thanks to my local veterinary practice and particularly Kirsty, Aaron and Sophie who from first consultation resulting in arranging Glasgow and through all the subsequent weeks helping and advising me and caring for both our welfare. Lastly Karen Cooper, a local Veterinary physiotherapist who on her first visit took time gaining Bella's trust and during the five weekly treatments worked wonders also helping me with advice, support and useful homework.



It has been very traumatic, stressful and hard work but Bella could not have received any better treatment or care and I am truly grateful to all concerned".

Bella is now happily able to walk for 40 minutes and growing stronger every day!

Canine Crew at Edinburgh Airport

In February, we ran a two-day trial with Therapets at Edinburgh International Airport. Based on our successful model at Aberdeen Airport, we had teams of two dogs and two volunteers patrolling the check in desk area and first floor before security. Therapets on duty were Moffat the West Highland Terrier, Pippin the Miniature Schnauzer, Shadow the Golden Retriever, Harvey the Shih Tzu, Pepper the Cocker Spaniel, Ozzie the Golden Retriever and Willow the Old English Sheepdog.



We had been preparing to start services during the Easter weekend and summer holidays, however, due to the ongoing situation with the Coronavirus, things are now on hold until further notice but we will be excited to get this venture 'off the ground' in the future.

Congratulations!

Volunteer Kirsteen Steel was married on 21st March right at the start of the care homes going into lock down. Despite being unable to enter, the newly married couple took Therapet Millie and her pal to stand outside the care home they usually visit in Lockerbie and wave to the residents who sang a rendition of 'Congratulations' to them. There were so many positive comments from the family members about the joy this visit brought their relatives and Kirsteen responded "We're so happy to share our special day with the lovely residents of Dryfemount and the brilliant Care Staff. Our thoughts are very much with you. Keep safe and well." What a lovely gesture Kirsteen and congratulations to you both!



Youth and Mental Health



Our Therapets in Dundee & Angus were happy to support a project run by the charity, 'Feeling Strong', where young adults who were having difficulty in school, learned how to make a documentary about the benefits animals have on our mental health.

Filmed in early March 2020 at the Kirkton Community Centre, Dundee, the teenagers developed the questions, filmed and edited the session involving the CEO, volunteers and Therapets Buffy the Miniature Schnauzer, Penny the Labrador and Jensen the Golden Retriever. The film is up on our website in the News section and available via this link <https://youtu.be/MnQF1oJakiw>

Clap for Carers and Key Workers



Members and volunteers across the country are supporting our front line and key workers during this period of enforced isolation by participating in the weekly show of appreciation every Thursday at 8pm. Trustee and Area Representative for Stirlingshire, Lynsey Thomson stated *"As an NHS worker I can honestly say that it is the country's support that 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 so different and difficult just now and it's good to know that everyone is behind us."*

Therapet Jetta the Cocker Spaniel and owner Margaret Allan sent their well wishes to Stirling Community Hospital.

Supporting Home Schooling

As you know our film 'Children and Dogs' was updated in 2019 featuring our members and friends in the Aberdeen region. Our intention was to make this available to all schools in Scotland and in order to do this, we purchased a database of over 2000 contacts for primary level educational providers. We have recently emailed every school and contact on this list in order that they may use this resource to assist with Home Schooling during the Coronavirus outbreak. The film is accompanied by a quiz and is available to view directly from our website <https://www.canineconcernscotland.org.uk/schools-and-education> Please do share this with any friends and family who may be primary level educators who have not yet been made aware of this resource.



'Virtual' Therapet Visits



As we are mainly housebound, families and friends are using technology to keep in touch on a regular basis, Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are being used to share amusing stories as well as important government information. However, with face to face meetings being impossible the next best thing is a video chat using a platform such as Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp, or Facebook Messenger. Several of our volunteers around the country are keen to stay involved with the people they normally support and using such technology as well as old school pen and paper, here are some examples of what they are doing. But if you do, please remember that not everywhere will have the time or resources to respond as many will be under significant pressure right now. Please do send us in more examples as we know there are lots more of you out there undertaking similar activities and

we will try to include these on our social media feeds and future newsletters. As well as our website, we have accounts on Facebook, Twitter and now Instagram too.

Aberdeen

- Area Representative Fiona Watts has been reading to her Therapet Bruno the German Shepherd. The NHS Nursery she volunteers with have set them up on their online system and Fiona uploads the recordings so that children are able to watch these and read along. This will cheer them up and encourage them to read more to their own pets while in lock down.
- Area Representative for Aberdeen South, Carole Ledingham and her Therapets have been keeping in touch with residents at a care home through a weekly WhatsApp conversation and Therapet Dorothy the Jack Russell Terrier has sent residents cards. Carole won a dog portrait session at our Aberdeen volunteer get together in early March and is giving the framed painting of Dorothy to the care home that she visits.
- Therapet Bronte the Golden Retriever and owner Jacqui Finnie made a humorous video using 'My Talking Pet' which they shared via WhatsApp and Messenger with Aberdeen Airport, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, and a care home. Jacqui is an NHS Key Worker and has been juggling her job and using her spare time to send positive messages and photos from her Therapets to the people they would normally visit.
- Therapet Millie the Golden Retriever and owner Fiona Hurley have been keeping in touch with their local school using Google Hangouts. All the children can interact, and it makes the sessions fun. They played a Scavenger Hunt and the kids loved watching Millie tilt her head every time they spoke to her. Millie will also be helping two children from a nurture group as they will read to her online using Microsoft Teams as if they were in a regular 'Reading with Dogs' session.
- Every few days, volunteers Anne and Sam Murray share photos of Therapet Ruby, the Australian Shepherd, in the garden with wards in the ARI, Linn Moor and Cornerstone. Ruby's photo is pinned on the noticeboard in Ward 106 and is regularly featured on the NHS Grampian Instagram page.
- Claire Miller, along with a friend has made and supplied over 300 face masks for her local care homes and Linn Moor School. Therapet Lexi the Cocker Spaniel gets a cheery wave from the residents and staff as she helps with delivery.
- Elaine Young is working from home and on her daily walks, Therapet Bella the Labrador Retriever can pass the care home they usually visit and wave to the residents. Bella is also included in their regular newsletter.
- Marie Morrison sent a goodie bag to the care home she visits with the following message: *"Hi All. Just to let you know I am missing my visits and cuddles, Stressed ... then have a cuppie, fine peece and eat chocolate!! Mum says it always works for her!!! Keep safe and love to all. Orla (and mum)"*.



- Shona Barclay and Therapet Alfie the Cockapoo have sent two short video clips of them enjoying the sunshine and some singing to their local care home.
- Ian Rodger and Therapet Cody the German Shepherd printed lots of Easter cards for their local nursing home all featuring photos of the handsome Cody!
- Janet Murdoch and Therapet Wilson the Golden Retriever sent this photo to their nursing home in Stonehaven. The text reads *"Missing You All at Mowat Court. Keep Safe. Wilson"*



Edinburgh

- Eleven-year-old Therapet Ollie the Shetland Sheepdog is missing his regular visits to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh. Volunteer Yvonne Langley says "one little girl is writing to him in the meantime which is lovely"
- Therapet Bailey the Labrador Retriever and owner April Ponton set up their own YouTube channel where April reads fairy tales with photos of Bailey. They did this to keep in touch with their family and have now invited the residents of the care home they visit to watch/listen.

Moray

- Therapet Alba the Lhasa Apso has been filmed 'narrating' a story with the help of owner Lauren Hayward. This is available to children in the school she visits and through Lauren's own social media accounts.

West Lothian

- Area Representative Bill Macdonald used website Sway to record him and Therapet Veda, a Black Labrador, telling stories and singing songs for a local Nursery group to share with their families.

We do recognise that not everyone has the skill set or access to technology to get involved in such a way they might want - and that of course is fine. Volunteer Julie Munro who lives near Nairn, wanted to try doing a video with her Therapet Buddy the German Shepherd, to share with her local care home as she said *"I understand that there is nothing like the real thing and seeing them on screen isn't the same as a cuddle, but it may just brighten a bit of their day...even if it's one of the resident's birthdays a message could be sent"*. Julie is still working on it and is determined to learn how to do it even if it is after lockdown and she must enlist support from friends to show her how.

Pets and Coronavirus

There is useful information online as well as lots of misinformation about the different types of Coronavirus, of which Covid-19 is one, and their impact and transmission between humans and animals. The British Veterinary Association states *"It is very important that people don't panic about their pets. There is no evidence that animals can pass the disease to humans...our main advice for pet owners continues to be to practise good hand hygiene"*.

The Kennel Club website <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/> on caring for your dog during the ongoing situation with the Coronavirus. The range of topics include:

- Caring for your dog during the Coronavirus pandemic
- Can dogs catch Coronavirus
- Fun games to keep your dog occupied during Coronavirus
- Tips for grooming your dog at home
- Walking a dog safely for someone else during Coronavirus
- Child and Dog safety



Cats Protection has clear information for cat owners on their website <https://www.cats.org.uk/help-and-advice/coronavirus>

- Keeping your cat entertained
- Keeping your cat calm
- When to keep your cat indoors
- Lots of FAQs



Fundraising

Mackie Academy



Pupils at Mackie Academy in Stonehaven undertake an annual sponsored walk and vote which charities should receive the proceeds of their efforts. In December 2019, Canine Concern Scotland Trust and Myeloma UK were those charities. Volunteer Frances Anderson attended their assembly in December, and we were stunned to be presented with a cheque for £5000!

Thank you to all involved for this amazing contribution.

Aberdeen Area Annual Get Together

The Annual volunteer Area Meeting was held on 3rd at March at the Sandman Signature Aberdeen Hotel. It was a lovely evening with over 70 volunteers attending, many who were new to the charity, and there were opportunities to share experiences and get to know others. After an update from the Aberdeen Area Representatives, the CEO and Fraser Bain Duty Manager of Aberdeen Airport, there was fun and games and a raffle with fantastic prizes where over £1000 was raised. Well done everyone and thanks to the volunteers who organised this. Thank you also to the Sandman Signature Hotel for donating the use of the room and the refreshments – the cookies and pastries were much enjoyed!

Fundraising through Online Shopping

Many people are now making so many more of their purchases online, so we have now joined two online shopping platforms where a percentage is donated to the chosen charity each time you shop. You can share the links below with anyone you know, and we will get a percentage from the retailer every time that platform is used.



We have registered with Amazon Smile where 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>



We are now 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. It's easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us.

Additionally, we may win a £500 donation in the #easyfundraising Refer to Win competition. We only have until midnight on 18th May! To enter, all you have to do is sign up to support Canine Concern Scotland Trust on easyfundraising for free. Visit:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/canineconcernsctr/?invite=J5WECV&referral-campaign=c2s>

Raise FREE donations for us every time you shop online.
Over **4,000** shops and sites will donate!

Surveys

If you have a spare moment or two while you we are in lock down and these apply to you, please do assist our members and friends by completing their survey requests below or passing them on to others that you know will be able to assist by completing them.

Teacher's Perceptions - Reading To Dogs

One of our members, Jill Steel, is undertaking a survey as part of her Phd research at the University of Edinburgh. She is looking at programmes used throughout the UK where primary aged children spend time reading to dogs. Jill she is hoping her research will involve

some of the schools and volunteers in our 'Reading with Dogs' programme at some point in the future. The survey is aimed at Primary School teachers only.

<https://edinburgh.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/teacher-perceptions--reading-to-dogs>

Survey on Animal Handlers and Animal-Assisted Intervention within Primary Schools in the UK

This is a request from a student at Hartpury University, England who is studying for a MRes Anthrozoology. This survey will be used for research exploring animal-assisted intervention within primary schools. This survey is designed for those that have been involved in *taking and supervising animals within primary schools in the UK within the last three years* (to 31st December 2019)

<https://kwiksurveys.com/s/8IGXH6DP>

We are now on Instagram!

We invite you to share a picture of your Therapet (no humans) on our new Instagram page. Simply upload a photo of your Therapet and include their name and where in Scotland you live. This will share your wonderful Therapets with others throughout Scotland and beyond!

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



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