



# CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

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# your dog



**BREED PROFILE:  
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RIDGEBACK**

**CANDID  
CANINES!**  
DOG STREET  
PHOTOGRAPHY

**YOUR DOG  
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**MAGGIE'S  
CHRISTMAS MIRACLE**  
A FEEL-GOOD FESTIVE STORY





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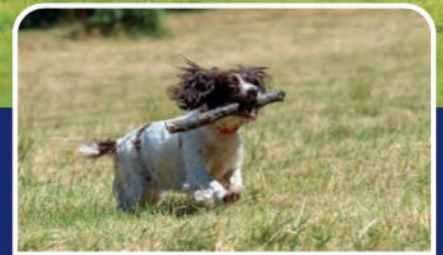
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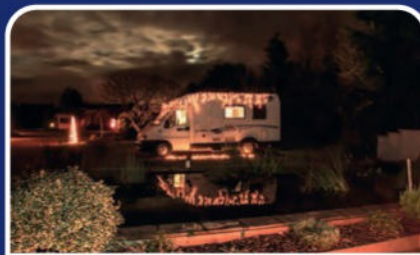
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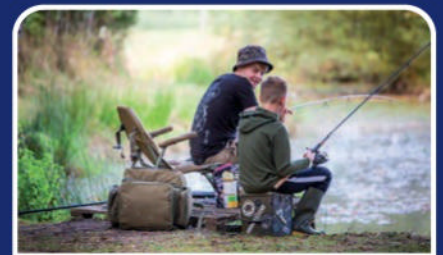
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# Hello!

**M**y favourite time of the year is fast approaching! I love Christmas. It may sound cheesy, but I really enjoy how it brings people together – and not just on the day itself. The whole season sees work Christmas parties, family gatherings, social group get-togethers, and families and friends around the dinner table. That, of course, includes our dogs.

You'll see my joy surrounding the season reflected in this month's choice of lead feature. I wanted a real feel-good story. It is sad in places – the festive period isn't always easy – but it is hoped that the magic of the season can lead us all

down a better path. I know you'll enjoy Maggie's story and want to thank (in print!) Andrea McHugh for finding such a heartwarming tale for our Christmas issue.

In this month, we've also got Christmas shopping inspiration and lots of festive fun in the junior section. I'd recommend adults have a flick through the pages meant for younger readers, too, as there is a festive recipe and a line-up of canine Christmas films.

As always, we've got a packed issue with lots to enjoy, even if you're not feeling that Christmassy yet. One of my favourite features this month is 'Candid Canines' on page 26. Chris Porsz's street photography of dogs from across the globe is brilliant.

All that is left is for me to wish you a very Merry Christmas! I hope you, your families, and canine companions have a lovely time together, no matter how you decide to spend it.

Mike



★ ★ ★ COVER STAR! ★ ★ ★

The front cover image of Maggie was taken by Caroline Dell of Workingline Images. A huge thank you to Caroline for allowing us to put her wonderful photography on the cover!

To find out more about her work, visit [workinglineimages.co.uk](http://workinglineimages.co.uk) or call 07798 883142.





WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

# Contents

 @yourdogmag

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6



## QUICK READS

- 6 Breathtaking views – be blown away with the view of this picturesque and historic outpost
- 8 Dog-friendly diary – from meeting Santa to light shows, December is full of opportunities for canine days out
- 10 Spotted – canine scenes and stories caught on camera
- 61 Q&A special – how to handle guarding behaviour

29



## YOUR DOG JUNIOR

Make a dog advent calendar, Christmas canine movies, what is heelwork to music, and puzzles

12

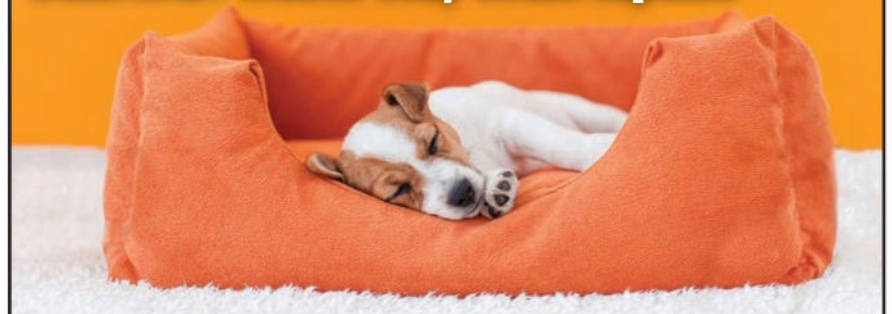


## REGULARS

- 12 **Community** – images of your dogs with their canine best friends
- 18 **New products** – find a brilliant buy for you or your dog!
- 35 **Breeds** – the Rhodesian Ridgeback in profile
- 38 **Travel** – inspiration for great Christmas getaways
- 44 **Nutrition** – what are functional foods?
- 46 **Vet diary** – Vicky Payne explores hair loss in her patients
- 58 **Rescue dogs** – a selection of dogs looking for homes
- 62 **Giveaways** – your chance to win paw-rizes!

48

How can we make our dog's bed comfortable and an asset to managing their behaviour? Trainer **Tony Cruse** explains





## THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

- 14** A Christmas miracle – this Christmas will be very different to last for our cover star Maggie
- 18** Christmas shopping – inspiration for festive buying!
- 20** Me and my dog – rescued from the streets of Mauritius, Lily has needed two life-saving operations since arriving in the UK
- 24** *Your Dog* tourist guide – we head to a canine statue on the Suffolk coast
- 26** Candid canines – we check out a new book featuring street photography of dogs
- 52** When does barking become excessive? – Toni Shelbourne investigates
- 55** Dog answers – health problems solved



35



26



18



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## WHO'S WHO AT YOUR DOG

### EDITOR



MICHAEL HALLAM

### REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS/EXPERTS

ANDREA MCHUGH, JACQUELINE BOYD, JOANNE BEDNALL, TONY CRUSE, TONI SHELBOURNE, TAMSIN DURSTON, VICKY PAYNE, JACKIE DRAKEFORD, HOLLY MASH



**Your Dog Magazine, Warners Group Publications, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 9PH**

Call 01778 395070 Email: [editorial@yourdog.co.uk](mailto:editorial@yourdog.co.uk)

### BEHIND THE SCENES...

#### Marketing managers

Lucie Cox, Vicki Gates

#### Designer

Nigel Fish

#### Production managers

Natalie Reynolds, Sarah Machin

### OUR ADVERTISING TEAM

#### Stephen Tanner

01778 392404

[stephen.tanner@warnersgroup.co.uk](mailto:stephen.tanner@warnersgroup.co.uk)

#### Andrea Walters

01778 395064

[andrea.walters@warnersgroup.co.uk](mailto:andrea.walters@warnersgroup.co.uk)

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We may occasionally make a small commission with product links within *Your Dog* Magazine, but rest assured we would never link to a product we didn't feel was suitable.



## Dunnottar Castle

**P**erched atop of a rocky headland, Dunnottar Castle is a compelling mix of natural beauty and chequered history. A photographer's paradise, the defiant ruin of the castle is popular with visitors who want to take in the climactic view and relive its intriguing stories.

The site has been inhabited for several thousands of years and has been a place of worship and fortification. The outpost has seen battles between the Scots and the Vikings, William Wallace and the English, as well as being home to a lion, disputed by the Pope, visited by monarchs, the home of uprisers,

and a safehouse for the Scottish Crown Jewels.

Situated just outside the town of Stonehaven, which is 15 miles from Aberdeen, the world-renowned site welcomes canine visitors as long as they are kept on short leads. There are refreshments facilities and free parking. Open all year round, it is just best to check before you visit as there are times when the castle closes due to inclement weather – visit [dunnottarcastle.co.uk](http://dunnottarcastle.co.uk)

The castle website has the tagline: "Once seen, never forgotten" a sentiment that rings true through the annals of history to the present day.





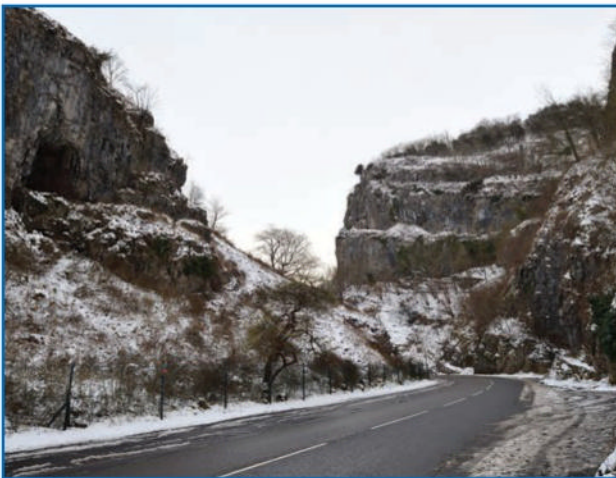




# Dog-friendly *Diary*

Festive events and places to visit for you and your dog

\* Check before you travel.



## CHRISTMAS AT CHEDDAR!

**NOVEMBER 16 – DECEMBER 24, 2024**

Experience the magic of Christmas at Cheddar Gorge and Caves from November 16 to December 24, 2024, where Father Christmas and his elves have transformed Gough's Cave into a festive workshop! With a Cheddar Gorge and Caves Day Ticket, you can explore the enchanting South West workshop, featuring elves sorting letters and preparing gifts. Families can also pre-book a Father Christmas Grotto session (additional charges apply) to meet Santa, sing festive songs, listen to a special story, and receive a gift. Enjoy a full day of adventure with access to six attractions, including stunning caves and breathtaking views, all while bringing your dog along for the festive fun! Don't miss this unique holiday experience!

● To find out more, visit [cheddargorge.co.uk/whats-on/christmas-at-cheddar-2024](https://cheddargorge.co.uk/whats-on/christmas-at-cheddar-2024)

## LAND OF LIGHTS – MILTON KEYNES

**NOVEMBER 3 – DECEMBER 29, 2024**

Immerse yourself in the enchanting Land of Lights Mystica, a lantern festival where myths and legends come alive in a dazzling display of light and colour. Stroll through an illuminated landscape featuring giant lanterns, glowing creatures, and magical surprises – perfect for families and adventurers alike. For dog lovers, there are special 'Dog-Friendly Nights' where your dogs can join in the fun! Waste bins and water bowls will be available along the trail, but please keep dogs on a short lead at all times. Note that dogs aren't allowed in indoor dining areas or the animal barn for the comfort of all guests.

● To find out more, including the dates for the specific dog-friendly nights, visit [miltonkeynes.landoflights.co.uk/dog-friendly-nights](https://miltonkeynes.landoflights.co.uk/dog-friendly-nights)

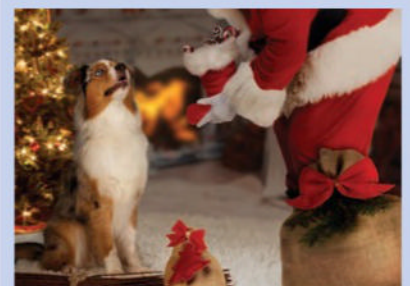


## ROSS & FRIENDS DOGGY WINTER WONDERLANDS

**DECEMBER 14-15 AND 21-22**

Ross & Friends Doggy Winter Wonderland is the perfect holiday celebration for you and your furry friend. The only Christmas event that's completely about your dog – enjoy Santa Paws pictures, a doggie Christmas market, a bonfire, and festive treats for both humans and pups! Don't miss Doggy Winter Wonderland — bring your dogs and make special memories together.

● To find out more, visit [rossandfriends.uk](https://rossandfriends.uk)



## SANTA PAWS AT DOBBIES

**DECEMBER 5 – 24, 2024**

Treat your canine companion to a festive outing with a visit to Santa Paws at your local Dobbies! From December 5 - 24 for just £9.99 per dog, this magical experience includes playtime with Santa and his elves, ensuring your furry friend is entertained while they visit. Each pup will also receive a special toy to take home and a chance to capture the moment with a professional photo alongside Santa. For an even more memorable family experience, you can purchase a children's ticket so they can meet Santa, too, making it a delightful day for everyone!

● To find out more, visit [events.dobbies.com](https://events.dobbies.com)



## PLACES TO VISIT

### Longsands Beach, Tyne and Wear

Located just 20 minutes from Newcastle city centre, Longsands Beach offers a generous stretch of golden sands and stunning coastal views for you and your dog to enjoy. With plenty of space to run and explore, dogs can frolic in the surf or take leisurely walks along the shoreline. The beach has designated areas where dogs can roam freely, especially during off-peak seasons, making it a great spot for socialising and exercise. Plus, the nearby cafés and facilities ensure you have everything you need for a perfect day out – whether it's a hearty meal or a hot drink to warm you up on a fresh winter's day.



### Fyvie Castle, Aberdeenshire

Fyvie Castle in Aberdeenshire is a wonderful dog-friendly destination. The expansive grounds offer scenic walks through beautifully landscaped gardens and woodlands, allowing dogs to explore while you soak in the castle's rich history and stunning architecture. Dogs on leads are welcome in the outdoor areas, ensuring you can enjoy the fresh air together. With ample space for picnics and the chance to discover the castle's intriguing stories, Fyvie Castle provides a delightful mix of nature, culture, and adventure for both you and your dog.

For more information, visit [nts.org.uk/visit/places/fyvie-castle](https://nts.org.uk/visit/places/fyvie-castle)



### Aber Falls, Snowdonia

Aber Falls and the surrounding area offers breathtaking scenery and plenty of space for exploration. The picturesque trails lead you through lush woodlands and along rushing streams, culminating in the stunning waterfall. Dogs are welcome on leads, making it easy for them to enjoy the fresh air and beautiful landscapes alongside you. With ample opportunities for walks, picnics, and even a chance to splash in the water, Aber Falls is a fantastic place to visit!

To find out more, visit [snowdonia.gov.wales/walk/aber-falls](https://snowdonia.gov.wales/walk/aber-falls)

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Image: Ajith Perera/Xinhua/Alamy Live News

▲ A dog from the Sri Lankan police department's canine force performs at a park in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

▼ Rescuers from the US Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater saved a man and his dog during Hurricane Helene, which brought winds up to 140mph, after his 36ft sailboat started taking on water approximately 25 miles off Sanibel Island, Florida.



Image: UPI/Alamy Live News



Image: Ian Davidson/Alamy Live News

▲ The Great Global Greyhound Walk took place in Brentwood, Essex. Over fifty sighthounds, mostly Greyhounds, took part in the walk in Weald Park. The walk finished with sausages for the dog participants!



▼ A dog shakes the water from its coat during a swim in the Saltdean Lido in Saltdean, Brighton, during a 'Dogtember' swimming event, which runs consecutively for four weekends across September and October.



Image: Gareth Fuller/Alamy Live News

▼ Motori Capitale is a prestigious show dedicated to historic motoring, hosted in Rome, Italy. The show includes Motori a 4 zampe, a competition that combines the charm of vintage cars and the grace of our four-legged friends. There's a parade on the red carpet to impress the judges!



Image: Brad Sterling/Alamy Live News



Image: Vaclav Salek/CTK Photo/Alamy Live News

▲ This picture captures a moment from the two-day Championship of rescue dogs of the Association of Rescue Brigades of Cynologists of the Czech Republic, in Břeclav.





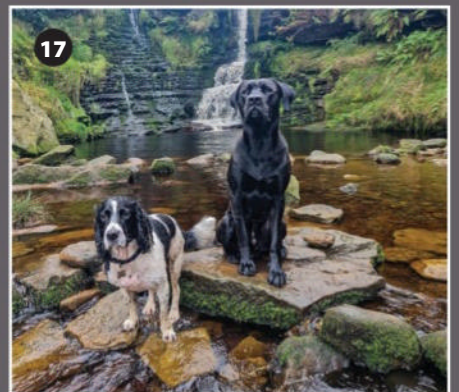
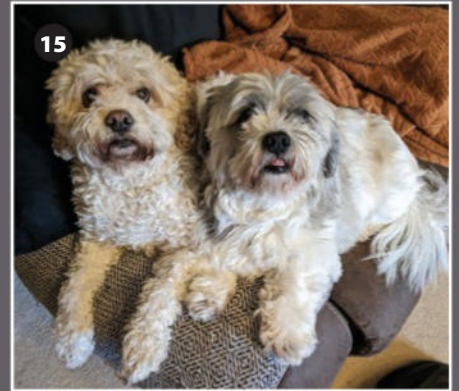
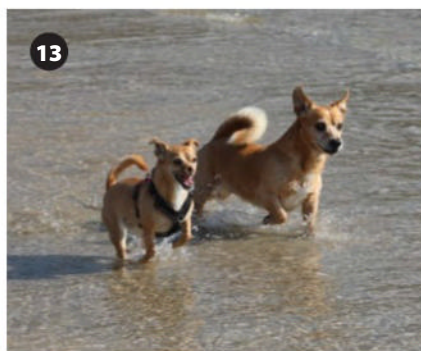
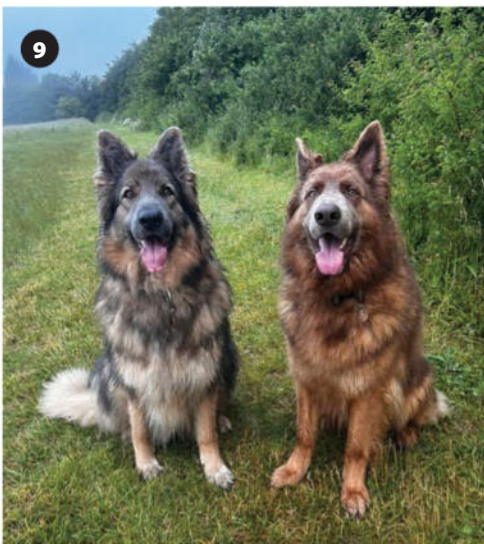
# Best friends!

We share your best pictures of your dogs hanging out with their canine pals!

- 1. Flossie and Mabel – Tracey C.
- 2. Ruby, Sparky and Elsie – Sarah T.
- 3. Skylar, Archer, Chase, and Walter – Ruth H.
- 4. Mylo, Arlo, Roo, Yogi, Gizmo, and Nico – Laura B.
- 5. Doris, Bob, and Mabel – Claire B.
- 6. Echo, Purdy, Delta, Alfie, Hazel, Mickey, Bramble, Gizmo, and Bertie – McTag T.
- 7. Loki and Enzo – Kate W.
- 8. Ruby and Holly – Jacqueline A.
- 9. Sise and Spike – Carole C.
- 10. Arthur and Coco – Tricia F.
- 11. Lexi and Guinness – Adele S.
- 12. Teddy and Daisy – Rosemary T.
- 13. Eleni and Ricki – Carla R.
- 14. Badger and Lilly – Gerri H.
- 15. Daisy and Bonnie – Natalie E.
- 16. Misty, Harley, and Quinn – Charlotte S.
- 17. Goose and Dexter – Sarah H.
- 18. Reggie and Ronnie – Sarah G.











Images: Workingline Images by Caroline Dell

# A Christmas miracle...

Last December the future looked bleak for working Cocker, Maggie, but what a difference a year can make!

**Andrea McHugh** takes up the story

**T**he build-up to Christmas is always exciting, but this time last year the festive season was far from magical for Victoria Gross. Faced with the very real possibility of

losing her beloved two-year-old Spaniel to an aggressive bone cancer, Victoria found herself praying for a Christmas miracle.

Victoria, who lives near Mildenhall in Suffolk, had bred

Maggie herself, and had big dreams for her perfect puppy.

"I've had working Cocker Spaniels for 11 years," says Victoria. "I had her mum, Clover, who was my second Spaniel and Maggie was from her third

and final litter, using my friend's wonderful stud dog.

"From day one, Maggie was brilliant. She was so easy to train, and very confident and happy – a typical merry Cocker! She was always wanting to





## “Maggie came out wearing a bandana that said: ‘Cancer Can’t Keep a Good Dog Down!’”

please me, and I decided I wanted to compete with her in field trials. In training she had lots of spirit and pace, but she also had an ‘off’ switch, which can be tricky with Cocker Spaniels!

“In 2022, I entered Maggie into a trial, but she cut her pad, so I withdrew her. It took a while for the paw to heal, and I decided to wait and try again in 2023. One day, I met up with a friend to do some training and Maggie went into some bracken and that night I noticed she was really stiff on her back leg. I rested her and gave her some pain relief and booked her in with my vet physio for a routine visit. The physio released a few tension spots and suggested that I continue to rest Maggie and see how she went.

“Maggie seemed to improve so I did another training day. She seemed fine, so I let her have a run in a trial, but she didn’t seem quite right, and we came home. The next day, Maggie was hopping lame, so after more pain relief and rest we returned to the physio who gave her laser therapy and a massage. Although Maggie seemed to be coming right, it was noticeable that her stride was a bit shorter on one side and the physio said that we needed to get to the cause of the problem.

### SHOCK DIAGNOSIS

“I took Maggie to the vet for X-rays and investigations. I thought she’d partially ruptured a tendon or something, and I can remember feeling disappointed that we’d miss another season. I had no idea of what was to come.

“When I went back for the results of the X-rays, the vet said it was bad news. They’d found a tumour. I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. The vet said they couldn’t believe it either and had repeated the X-rays twice. Although osteosarcoma is not unheard of in Cockers, it is very unusual and usually seen in senior dogs, whereas Maggie was

very young. She was immediately referred to Dick White Referrals (DWR) in Cambridgeshire and the team went through all the treatment options. I knew immediately that her leg would have to be amputated.

“The DWR team explained that although Maggie was insured for £7,000 with Pet Plan, that limit would be reached very quickly. To keep costs down, they suggested that my vet did the amputation, with Maggie returning to DWR for chemotherapy. Just before Christmas last year, my beautiful Maggie underwent surgery to remove her leg. She was then transferred to an out of hours vet and I can remember being left in the waiting room with her sitting on my lap. She had a drip in for pain relief, and I was waiting for about half an hour with lots of dogs coming and going. I couldn’t believe what was happening.

“The out of hours vet eventually

took Maggie and said I could collect her the next day, but I saw she was clearly in pain, and the site looked inflamed so we went back to my vet’s. Maggie was given antibiotics and a sedative and slept a lot, with me syringing Oralade into her mouth to try and keep her hydrated. I kept whispering, ‘come on Maggie, you’ve got to get well, we’ve got a bucket list of things to do together.’

“The fluids seemed to help, and she was a bit brighter the next day, and eating a little. However, there was a bump on the wound, and on Sunday evening this burst so I took her back to the vet. She was given more antibiotics and painkillers, and I had to write everything down on a white board to make sure she had all her drugs at the right time.

“On our next visit, the vet still wasn’t happy with the wound and took a swab, but by then I just wanted to take her back to DWR. It was a good job I did, because the wound had gone necrotic (meaning the tissue was dying).

### MANUKA MAGIC

“Maggie was admitted five days before Christmas, on 20 December and stayed in for nine long days.



Opposite page:  
Christmas will be much  
happier this year.

Right: Maggie is  
enjoying being back to  
field trials.





## CHRISTMAS MIRACLE

It was such a worrying time. At one point, I remember my mum said 'let's go and buy a Christmas tree', but I couldn't face it. I wanted nothing to do with Christmas while Maggie was so ill, although looking after my other dogs kept me going, and I knew I had to stay strong for Maggie. It wasn't always easy, and there was a real low point when the vet rang and said they'd had to scrape away a lot of necrotic muscle from Maggie's hip joint, and I honestly thought I was going to lose her. I asked if she would ever have a good quality of life, but the vet said she thought Maggie would be OK, so I vowed to do my best for her.

"And then Christmas Day came. Because the necrotic tissue was too close to one of Maggie's main arteries for the vets to remove any more, they started applying Manuka honey to the wound. It worked like magic, and from then on Maggie started to recover. Finally, on 29 December, she was allowed to come home, and was a completely different dog. I was so happy!

### **WALKING FOR MAGGIE**

"Unfortunately, by this time my insurance had completely gone. Her amputation had cost £2,000

and the stay at DWR was £5,600. The insurance paid half of that and the rest I put on my credit card. Her chemotherapy would cost another £3,000 and I didn't know how I'd find the money. A lot of friends wanted to donate money, and even set up a GoFundMe account, but I felt incredibly guilty. I then came up with the idea of 'Walking 100 miles for Maggie' in January, and the response was amazing. Five people and 22 dogs joined in! Even the team at DWR donated, because everyone loved Maggie and thought she was special.

"We raised enough money to pay for Maggie's chemo, and thankfully she responded really well. She had four rounds, three weeks apart, and luckily fell in love with Ed, the oncology vet and her favourite nurse, Jodie, as well as the soft tissue specialist called Pippa, so she was always happy to have her treatments. I'll never forget the last day of treatment, when Maggie came out wearing a bandana that said: 'Cancer Can't Keep a Good Dog Down.' The team rang a pretend bell, and everyone clapped. It was an amazing moment!

"Maggie continues to go for physio and hydrotherapy at Wren Hydrotherapy and Rehabilitation Centre who have been a huge support throughout everything.

She also goes for quarterly X-rays to check her lungs, but thankfully everything is clear, and long may that continue.

"And so now Christmas is nearly here again, and what a year it has been! Maggie is now three years old, and we've been busy crossing things off that bucket list that I promised her. She's always loved beaches, so we've visited lots, and you'd never know that she's got three legs if you saw her running! We've lots more beaches to visit, and I've bought her a bright pink life jacket so she can swim in the sea.

"Best of all, we recently entered an open working test, where the dogs work for dummies rather than live birds. Maggie came third in a big class that had a field trial champion in it, and lots of previous test and trial winners! She had the best time and had so many lovely compliments from judges and other competitors. I was so very proud of her.

"Last Christmas, when I was feeling really sad, one of my friends told me not to give up hope because I was going to get a Christmas miracle. When Maggie came home, it really felt like that. Christmas this year will be very different and very special for all of us!"



Having three legs doesn't slow her down!



# Christmas

# is coming...



## PROTECT WHAT YOU LOVE: KEEP YOUR PET SAFE IN THE CAR

Car journeys are a fact of life for most dogs and being able to travel happily and safely is just as important for your pet as it is for you and the rest of your family.

It's important that your dog is suitably restrained when it's travelling in a vehicle - it's the law and the law is there to try and

keep both you and your dog safe.

Finding a suitable product for your pet – safe, comfortable, easy to use – is important so you can all relax and enjoy the journey. The Travelling with Pets website specialises in high quality, innovative products that help pets to travel happily and safely in cars.

For example, the 4pets Caree is a state-of-the-art carrier for small pets weighing up to 15kg.

It fits to the rear seat or passenger seat, either using a seatbelt or, for faster fitting and removal, using the ISOFIX latching points. It's designed for safety and has passed TÜV's crash-testing regime. It's also designed for ease of use, with a door on each side and a very cosy bed that's easily removed for hand washing.

**To learn more about keeping your pet safe in the car, visit [travellingwithpets.co.uk](http://travellingwithpets.co.uk)**

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## BAMBOODLES DOG CHEW TOYS

Treat your pup this Christmas with durable and fun chew Bamboodles Chew Toys - with a unique T Base - BUILT FOR PAWS! Comes in a variety of shapes, sizes, and flavours so the perfect solution for any fur baby - ready for aggressively chewing toys. A perfect gift to keep your dog happy, busy, and mentally stimulated for hours!

● Find out more at [pettradeinnovations.com](http://pettradeinnovations.com)



## WONDERFUL WORLD OF TREATS CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

Looking for the perfect gift for your furry friend? Treat your dog to healthy, delicious snacks! With a variety of different training treats, based our favourite Take aways - which is your dogs favourite - Pizza, Carrot Cake, Salmon Maki Rolls, or perhaps a Burger! Packed with nutrients, these treats reward your pup while supporting their overall well-being and happiness. A tail-wagging delight!

● Find out more at shop. [wonderfulworldoftreats.co.uk](http://wonderfulworldoftreats.co.uk)

## SIR WOOFCHESTERS CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

This Christmas, spoil your pup with treats inspired by classic British pub grub! Think beefy burgers, fish & chips, or sausage bites—dog-friendly, of course. All washed down with a Bark Brew, or PawStar Martini. Opt for natural, grain-free treats with flavors like roast lamb and chicken. Perfect for a festive feast your furry friend will love, packed with flavor and nutrition!

● Find out more at [pettradeinnovations.com](http://pettradeinnovations.com)



## WALK THIS WAY!

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● Find out more at [dogmatic.org.uk](http://dogmatic.org.uk) or call 01952 245330





# What's new?

Looking to treat yourself or your dog? Here's a selection of new products that might take your fancy

## NILAQUA WATERLESS PET SHAMPOO RANGE

Nilaqua, a leading waterless washing brand, has launched an innovative range of pet-washing products. The products are made ethically in the UK using water-based, biodegradable ingredients that are vegan-friendly and gentle on pets. There's no need to add any water! The new Nilaqua eco pet range includes:

**Puppy Shampoo:** Gentle and enriched with Vitamin E, perfect for young and sensitive skin.

**Poo Shampoo:** Specially formulated with a blend of fragrances to neutralise the unpleasant odour of fox poo.

**Muddy Paws Shampoo:** Features a foaming burst action that effectively lifts mud from fur.

**Beach Day Shampoo:** Designed to remove sand, with extra conditioners to counteract the effects of sea salt.

**Critter Shampoo:** Contains essential oils that naturally repel ticks and fleas and is pesticide-free.

**Older Dog Shampoo:** This gentle formula is ideal for dogs with urinary incontinence or other issues that make frequent bathing difficult.

**Colognes and detangle sprays:** These are designed to leave your pet's coat smelling fresh and feeling silky smooth while effortlessly removing knots and tangles.



● To buy: [waterlessdogshampoo.co.uk](http://waterlessdogshampoo.co.uk)



## PAWABLE COLLAR-GEN JOINT CARE SUPPLEMENT

Pawable has released an update to its popular collagen for dogs joint care product. The product already contained five different types of hydrolysed collagen types. Now, Pawable includes undenatured type II collagen (UC-II), too. Undenatured collagen works differently to hydrolysed collagen and studies have shown that UC-II activates immune cells which signal the body to rebuild and repair joint cartilage.

● To buy: [pawable.co.uk](http://pawable.co.uk)

## DOG & BOND'S MAKE-YOUR-OWN DOG TREAT KITS

Handmade in the UK, Dog & Bond's make-your-own treat mix is available in three flavours: Tasty Cheese and Super Seaweed, Cinnamon Apple and Peanut, and, just in time for Christmas, Scrummy Gingerbread.

The recipes are grain-free, gluten-free, and made with human-grade ingredients, making it possible for pet parents to enjoy the treats alongside their dogs. Each kit is designed to be easy to make at home, with clear instructions and the option to personalise according to a dog's taste or dietary needs. Plus, the mixes come with a reusable bone-shaped cookie cutter or, for the gingerbread flavour, a cute Christmas tree cutter.



● To buy: [dogandbond.com](http://dogandbond.com)



**THE CHUCKIT!  
ECO FETCH RANGE**

The Chuckit! Eco Fetch range features three innovative products – the Eco Fetch Ball, Eco Fetch Stick, and Eco Fetch Launcher, which comes with a compatible Eco Fetch Ball.

Each toy is made from 40% recycled rubber taken from Chuckit!'s popular Ultra, Erratic, and Rebound Balls, along with 40% recycled resin. This sustainable manufacturing process ensures every toy is unique, helping to

reduce waste without sacrificing the performance or durability Chuckit! is known for. These toys are unique — no two are alike!

With vibrant colours and ergonomic designs, the Eco Fetch range enhances visibility and ease of use, making outdoor play sessions even more enjoyable for both pets and their owners. As more pet parents seek more environmentally friendly products, Chuckit! Eco Fetch meets this growing demand, combining fun with eco-consciousness.



● To buy: Search Chuckit Eco Fetch on Amazon, or find selected independent pet shops



**COMPANY OF ANIMALS' NEW RANGE  
OF COACHI NATURAL TRAINING TREATS**

The Coachi Natural Training Treats are available in three specialised variants:

**Puppy** – Made with a blend of chicken, sweet potato, pea, and cheese, and enriched with prebiotics for digestive health, they support healthy growth and development for puppies.

**Dog** – Specially crafted for adult dogs, these fish-based treats are packed with sweet potato, turmeric, and ginger, ingredients known to promote joint care and mobility. Additionally, they are rich in omega-3 and 6 fatty acids, essential for boosting immune health and overall vitality.

**Calming** – Perfect for dogs of all ages, these calming treats are made with turkey, sweet potato and pea, and infused with L-tryptophan, chamomile, and lavender. Designed to help reduce stress and anxiety, they provide a natural solution for moments when your dog needs to relax.

● To buy: Search Coachi Training Treats on Amazon, or find selected independent pet shops

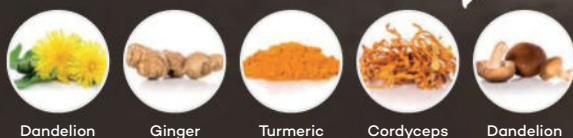
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Joanne Bednall has been a freelance journalist, writer and author, specialising in dogs and horses, for the past 30 years



# No stone unturned

Rescued from the streets of Mauritius by holidaymakers, Denise and Dave Bond, Lily's penchant for pebbles has resulted in two life-saving operations in 12 months. **Joanne Bednall** reports





**“Denise is so grateful to Anna and the team at Calweton Vets for the excellent care Lily received”**

**W**hen Lily arrived in the UK from the subtropical Indian Ocean island of Mauritius last summer, her new owners hoped that a comfortable home, good-quality food, endless countryside walks, and being showered with love would mean the end to all her troubles as a stray.

Above: Lily with vet, Anna King (left) and owner, Denise Bond

Although Lily, now estimated to be about four years old, initially took a while to adapt to her new life on the cooler Cornish coast, she eventually settled with Denise Bond and her husband, Dave, in Looe. But just a couple of months after arriving, Lily started to develop a rather disconcerting habit that very nearly twice proved fatal.

Last September, the young dog – which DNA testing has revealed is a mix of 21 different breeds, including 12% wolf – picked up and swallowed an ornamental stone from the couple’s garden.

Denise, 64, thinks that Lily watched and copied her daughter’s Cocker Spaniel X Patterdale Terrier, Wesley, playing with the two pence-sized stones and carrying them around in his mouth.

“Lily never showed any interest in the pebbles when we were with her so it never crossed my mind that she would actually swallow one,” explained Denise, a beauty therapist and fitness instructor, who also works as an airbrush tattooist in the summer.

After refusing food and being unable to go to the toilet, Lily became really poorly one night with a fever and difficulty breathing.

### **Life-saving surgery**

Sick with worry, Denise rushed her dog straight to Calweton Veterinary Group’s Callington practice, where vets took her straight into theatre.

“They had to carry out emergency surgery to remove a large stone that had become lodged in her intestines,” she continued. “They said that they had never seen a dog with such a high temperature, and she was a very lucky girl to survive.”

A few days after recovering from the life-saving operation, Lily developed an abscess on her leg, which took six months of antibiotics and a year to fully heal.

Not content with causing her owner a huge amount of stress, worry, and expense, Lily quite clearly didn’t read the memo when it came to the dangers of playing with stones.

Just 10 months later, the rescue started vomiting all night for no apparent reason.

“Lily was still eating but couldn’t stop being sick, and I could also feel a lump on the left-hand side of her tummy,” continued Denise, who again rushed Lily to Calweton Veterinary Group’s Callington practice, where she was X-rayed.



## “The final straw was the couple seeing Lily running behind their taxi en route to the airport for their flight home.”



Top: An X-ray showing the stone inside Lily's intestines

Bottom: The stone in Lily's intestines

“My first thought was that the lump might have been cancer, but the X-rays revealed an obstruction in her intestines. I couldn't believe it when vets told me that another pebble was the cause of the oval-shaped mass.”

Vet Anna King was worried that the stone could cause sepsis or a ruptured intestine, so she operated straight away to remove it. Luckily, the procedure went well, and Lily was discharged later that day. Denise has now removed every single one of the pebbles in her garden and is keeping a close eye on Lily when she is out and about. The family is also actively discouraging Wesley from chewing, playing and fetching stones by swapping them for a ball.

Denise is so grateful to Anna and the team at Calweton Vets for the excellent care Lily received.

“They looked after her so well, and she recovered quickly after both surgeries – they definitely saved her life the first time.”

### Down to fate

Denise believes it was fate that Lily came into their lives. She had always wanted a dog, and Lily is her first.

Three years ago, Denise and Dave had planned a holiday on the sunshine isle of Mauritius, a holidaymaker's paradise 1,130 kilometres east of Madagascar and known for its beautiful beaches, lagoons, and reefs. But Covid put paid to that. Then the following year, the destination was fully booked, so the couple didn't get to go on their dream vacation until April 2023.

On the first morning of their 10-day holiday, Dave made sure he got down to the beach early to catch the first of the day's rays. He noticed a group of stray dogs nearby, but one seemed much friendlier than the others and came up to him, as if wanting to play.

From that point on, the medium-sized brown dog started following Dave and Denise from the hotel to the beach daily.



“Lily shadowed us every day,” continued Denise, who felt a connection with the dog right from the start. “She would sit by us on the beach, putting her head on my foot, and followed me everywhere, even to the loo and the restaurant!

“But the staff at the hotel didn’t like guests feeding or encouraging strays – we even had a note put on the bed in our room that read, ‘please do not feed the dogs.’

“On our last day, Lily knew that we were leaving - she found us and sat by our cases.”

The final straw was the couple seeing Lily running behind their taxi en route to the airport for their flight home.

“It was heartbreaking,” confessed Denise. “I broke down in tears and knew then that we had to rescue her.”

Just by chance, a few days into their holiday, Denise had bumped into a couple staying in the same hotel, who told her that they had adopted a dog on the island through an international non-profit organisation called 4 Paws Rescue & Relocation.

Once home, tormented by the thought of Lily alone on the dusty streets begging for scraps, Denise got more and more upset. So, she texted Lisa Kenrick, founder of 4 Paws Rescue, who found Lily, sterilised and vaccinated her, treated her for a tick bite and helped Denise and Dave make arrangements to fly her to the UK.

“Once Lisa had located Lily, she said that she was looking very forlorn and sad but had latched onto a German couple, who also wanted to adopt

her,” said Denise, who was determined not to give up on the dog she had fallen in love with.

“We had to wait about eight weeks before Lily was fit to travel, then she was put on a plane to Heathrow, followed by a taxi journey to Looe. I used some money I’d inherited to bring Lily home and it was worth every penny.

“Apart from being wary of workmen and the television, she loves her walks, other dogs and children, and has slotted comfortably into our lives.

“I knew she was gentle and kind-natured the first moment I saw her - I wouldn’t have wanted any other dog.

“It was definitely fate that Lily found us. She’s such a lovely little girl and has a better life here than she did there.”

**“It was definitely fate that Lily found us.”**



Lily and Dave on the beach in Mauritius



# At the heart of community

This month, we head to the Suffolk coast on our canine tourist trail

**W**e're pleased to bring you the *Your Dog* Tourist Guide, where we go around the UK and across the world to find our favourite dog-themed tourism hotspots. From well-known tourist attractions to hidden gems, we're giving you great places to visit that have a canine connection...

In Aldeburgh, on the Suffolk coastline, a dog statue stands at the heart of the town. Overlooking the boating pond, the memorial to Snooks is popular with residents, who often enjoy dressing the bronze-cast canine, and has a long-standing legacy.



The statue has been around for decades



## The doctors' companion

Snooks was owned by two local doctors, Robin and Nora Acheson, who began practising in the town in the 1930s and were known for caring deeply about their community. The dog would accompany them on their rounds and was often spotted walking down the high street. The canine companion's name is said to have come from tinned snook fish which was eaten during the war.

Dr. Robin passed away in 1959 and, in 1961, a statue of Snooks was unveiled to commemorate his life's work, funded by the people of the local area. The inscription on the plinth pays tribute to Robin. Nora continued to care for the local community right up until her death in 1981 and she was added to the inscription to remember her, too.

As a pet, Snooks was reported to have a penchant to eat pebbles and had to be operated on to treat his unusual habit. His legacy is one of being part of a community and caring for each other – and the importance of Snooks was reinforced after an incident in 2003.

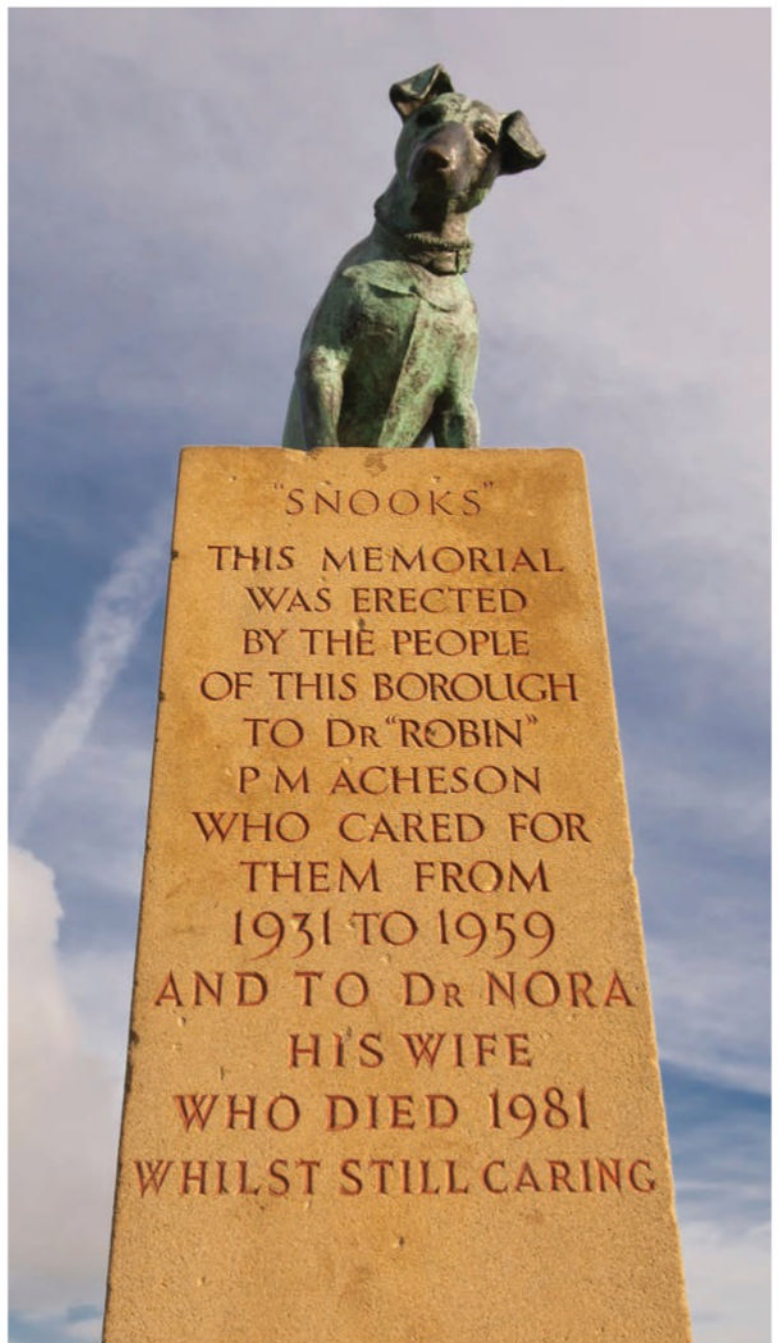
## Dog theft

Having sat by the boating pond, just metres from the sea, for over 40 years, in February 2003 the statue of Snooks was stolen. The town was outraged. There was a huge effort by the town to raise money for a new statue, with children even donating pocket money, and it was important to people that the



Above right: the statue features a tribute to the Achesons

Right: Residents enjoy dressing Snooks



new memorial was an exact replica of the original. The replica was installed later that year as Snooks took up his position near the boating lake once again.

The story took another twist when a decade later the original statue was found and returned to Aldeburgh. Antiques dealer John O'Connor discovered it at a fair and, after investigating further, realised it had been stolen years before. Once it was returned, a decision had to be made about what to do with the original. It was decided that it would take up residence

at Aldeburgh Hospital, which the Achesons had connections with, in the garden to be enjoyed by residents and staff.

Visitors to Aldeburgh can head to the boating pond and see the Snooks statue. You may even see him after the local residents have yarn bombed him or dressed him in a seasonal outfit.

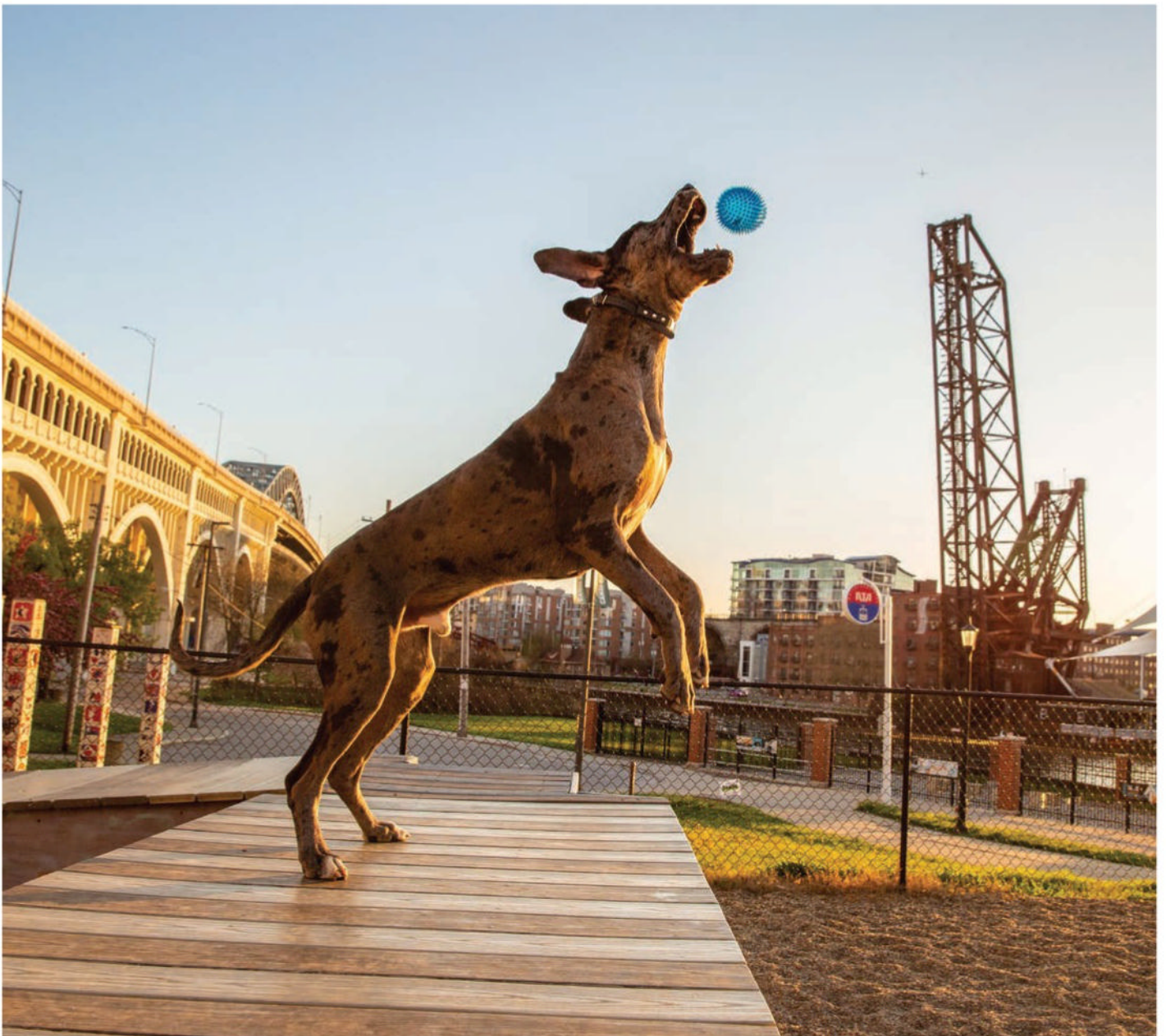
**Where?** Aldeburgh, Suffolk  
**When?** It's a public space so you can visit all year round  
**Can I take my dog?** Yes



# CANDID canines!

We check out *Barking 2!* – a new book of street photography that captures dogs from all over the world

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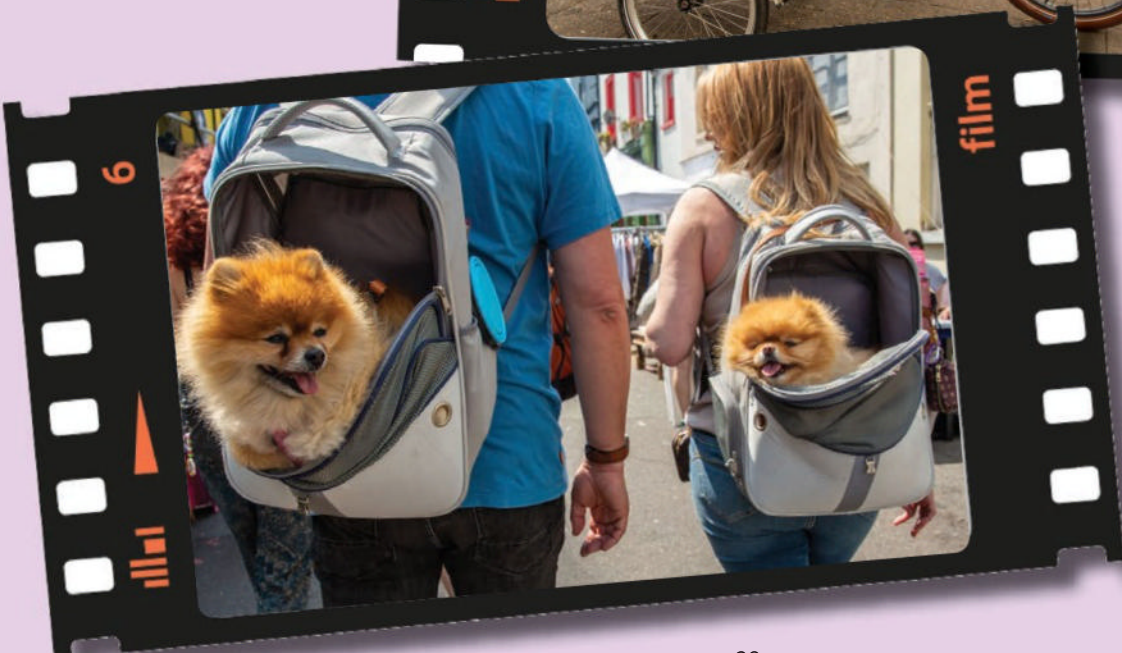
## Barking 2!

This is the work of Chris Porsz, a brilliant photographer who uses his street art style to capture

dogs out and about. *Barking 2!* is the second book in the series and is back due to popular demand after the first book was published in 2019. It's very different to other dog photography books where the canines are static and posed. There are over 200 dogs captured in the book, so if you enjoyed these images, why not buy the book? Visit [chrisporsz.com](http://chrisporsz.com)



DOG STREET PHOTOGRAPHY





# your dog junior



**We've lost  
Maude!**

Can you help find our  
dog? She's somewhere  
in this magazine!

## REAL LIFE ADVENTURES



BY GARY WISE & LANCE ALDRICH



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Christmas dog treat recipe **Puzzles!** heelwork to music  
**5 CHRISTMAS DOG MOVIES** & much more...

**Let's look inside >>>>**



# Make your dog his very own Christmas Advent Calendar!

Creating a Christmas advent calendar for your dog is a fun and thoughtful way to celebrate the season! Here's a step-by-step guide to help you make a special advent calendar filled with treats and toys:

### Materials you will need:

- 1** Choose a large box, wooden crate, or individual small bags/boxes. You can also use a decorative calendar with numbered compartments.
- 2** Select a variety of dog-friendly treats (store-bought or home-made).
- 3** Include some small toys, such as squeaky toys or chew toys.
- 4** Use festive wrapping paper, sticker, or markers to label the days on each bag or compartment. You can print, write, or use stickers to label each day from 1 to 24 (or 25).







## Gather treats and toys

You want to choose a mix of treats and toys. For treats, consider options like:

- Peanut butter biscuits
- Small training treats
- Frozen yoghurt treats

For toys, look for smaller items like:

- Rubber balls
- Stuffed animals
- Rope toys

Place a treat or toy in each section or bag. Make sure to mix them up so your dog gets a surprise each day. Find a special spot for your advent calendar, such as on a shelf or a dedicated area in your home, and somewhere out of reach of your dog so they can't get hold of the goodies when no-one is around!

Each day, let your dog open a treat or toy by either having them choose a numbered bag or by helping them open the relevant compartment. Make it a fun ritual!

## IMPORTANT

Ensure that all treats and toys are safe for your dog, avoiding any items that could pose a choking hazard.

Consider the size of your dog when choosing treats and toys. Vary the types to keep it exciting!

Use some of the treats for training sessions during the month, turning the advent calendar into a fun training tool – how many tricks from our step-by-step guides have you taught your dog so far?



# 5 Christmas dog movies you need to watch!

We've put together a list of five films that capture the spirit of the season, while highlighting the bond between dogs and their families...

**1 The Dog Who Saved Christmas** – A firm favourite for us! In this movie, a lovable Labrador faces an unexpected challenge when two burglars target his family's holiday. As the mischievous thieves' plot to steal Christmas, Zeus springs into action, using his cleverness and bravery to save the day.

**2 A Dog Named Christmas** – A young man with a developmental disability inspires his family to adopt a dog during Christmas. As they navigate the challenges of training and caring for their new pet, they discover the power of love and compassion. It's a heartwarming film and really shows to bond between dogs and their owners.

**3 Snow Buddies** – Five adventurous Golden Retriever puppies embark on a thrilling journey to the snowy mountains of Alaska. When they accidentally find themselves in a snow dog race, they must work together to navigate challenges and

outsmart the competition. This one's packed with humour, heart, and puppy antics!

**4 The Twelve Dogs of Christmas** – A young girl named Emma teams up with a quirky dog trainer to save a struggling animal shelter during the Christmas season. As they prepare for a festive dog show, they encounter charming canines and heartwarming moments. This delightful family film celebrates the spirit of giving, love for animals, and the magic of Christmas.

**5 Beethoven's Christmas Adventure** – The beloved St Bernard embarks on a heartwarming journey to save Christmas. When Santa's magical sleigh is stolen, Beethoven teams up with a group of kids to retrieve it and restore holiday cheer. These films are great for all the family – even the dog! So, stock up on your favourite festive snacks, grab your cosiest blankets, sit back and enjoy!



## WHAT IS HEELWORK TO MUSIC?

Heelwork to music is a fun and creative dog sport that combines obedience and dance. In this activity, dogs perform various movements and tricks in sync with music, following commands from their handlers. It emphasises heelwork, where the dog stays close to the handler's side, and can include a variety of footwork patterns, spins, and other choreographed movements. Sometimes these routines can be pretty impressive, and you may have seen dogs and their handlers performing on the TV – on programmes such as *Britain's Got Talent*

and *Crufts*... and we all remember the OGs, Ashleigh and Pudsey!

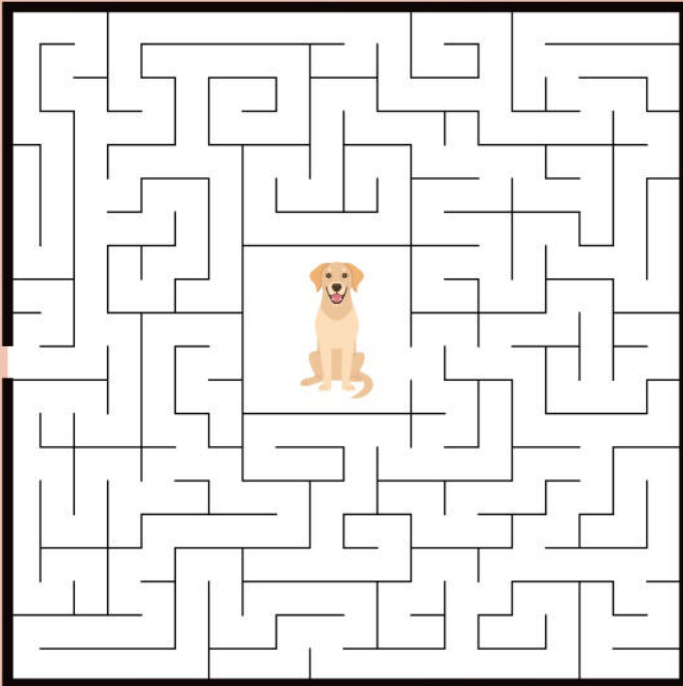
Competitions often showcase both the handler's skill in guiding the dog and the dog's ability to perform intricate routines, making it a visually engaging and entertaining performance. It's a great way to bond with your dog while exercising their mind and body! So, if you ever fancy giving it a go, check out the Kennel Club's guide to Heelwork to Music, visit [thekennelclub.org.uk/events-and-activities/heelwork-to-music/new-to-heelwork-to-music](http://thekennelclub.org.uk/events-and-activities/heelwork-to-music/new-to-heelwork-to-music)





## Mustard in the maze

Help guide Mustard through the maze...



## Wordsearch

Can you find all eight words?

S	L	C	H	U	Q	D	R	B	I	K	K
E	L	O	H	E	K	S	C	H	B	G	V
I	A	L	O	Y	S	E	E	O	N	R	Y
P	B	L	N	E	N	B	N	S	T	V	L
P	Y	A	V	H	H	S	Y	I	H	U	B
U	L	R	O	C	W	A	O	D	N	L	P
P	F	W	D	N	U	H	S	H	C	A	D
J	L	M	N	X	W	H	V	U	G	T	C
V	A	C	C	I	N	A	T	I	O	N	O
R	E	L	I	E	W	T	T	O	R	X	I
F	S	U	V	C	E	H	D	M	K	Q	G
S	X	O	E	K	H	T	E	D	K	K	O

- CANINE
- COLLAR
- DACHSHUND
- FLYBALL
- HOWL
- PUPPIES
- ROTTWEILER
- VACCINATION

## Spot the difference!

There are five differences between these two pictures, can you spot them?



## Guess the breed!



Can you guess which breed this is?

Here's a few clues:

- This breed is one of the oldest and smallest native Japanese dogs, originally bred for hunting small game in the mountainous regions of Japan
- With a curly tail, erect ears, and a compact body, this breed is often compared to a fox due to its pointed features and confident stance
- Known for their spirited and bold nature, these dogs are intelligent and can be a bit independent, often displaying a playful yet stubborn attitude





# Christmas dog treat recipe

Love baking? Try making these tasty festive peanut butter, pumpkin, and cinnamon treats for your dog this Christmas...

**Ingredients:**

- 250g pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)
- 250g cup natural peanut butter (make sure it's xylitol-free)



- 240g wholemeal flour (or a gluten-free alternative)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup water (as needed)

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat your oven to 175°C (350°F).
2. In a large bowl, combine the pumpkin puree and peanut butter. Mix until smooth.
3. Gradually add the wholemeal flour and cinnamon, mixing until

- a dough forms. If the dough is too dry, add a little water, a tablespoon at a time, until it comes together.
4. Lightly flour your work surface and roll out the dough to about 1/4 inch thick.
5. Use cookie cutters to cut out shapes. You can use festive shapes like trees, stars, holly or gingerbread men!
6. Place the cut-out treats on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until they are golden brown and firm.
7. Allow the treats to cool completely on a wire rack before giving them to your dog. Store the treats in an airtight container for up to a week. You can also freeze them for longer storage!

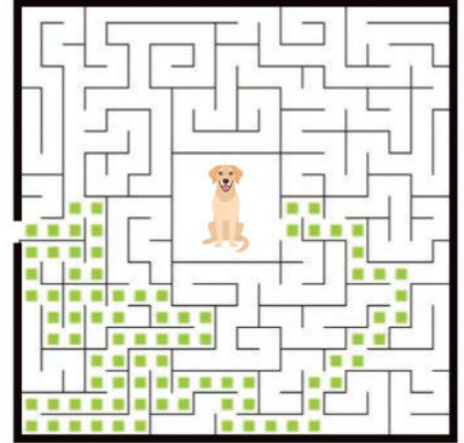


**We've lost Maude!**

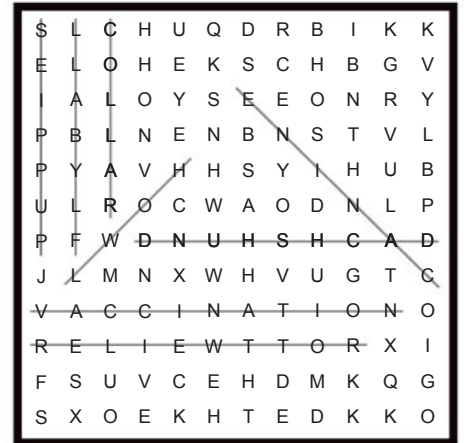
She might be on page 49.



**Mustard in the maze**



**Wordsearch**

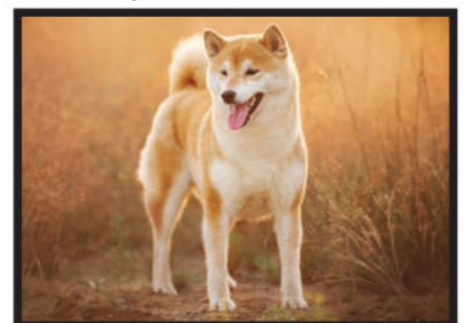


**Spot the difference!**



**Guess the breed**

The name of the breed is **The Japanese Shiba Inu**. Did you guess correctly?





# Rhodesian Ridgeback

**T**he Rhodesian Ridgeback is an impressive-looking, strong, and muscular dog.

Originally bred in South Africa as a scent hound, his original job was to track game animals. When the breed was taken to Rhodesia (modern day Zimbabwe), it was used to hunt and track lions, to the extent that the breed has also gone by the name of African Lion Hound. He would work as part of a pack to drive game towards waiting guns or corner his prey until hunters arrived. They've even been prized in North America as capable of hunting bears. They're fast on the scent, athletic, and undoubtedly courageous.

While this may be a pretty fearsome hunting dog, they are affectionate as a companion. Focused when working, the Rhodesian Ridgeback is usually calm and gentle while relaxing. They enjoy having jobs to do and make loyal pets, who are ready to guard, but can be standoffish with strangers. The breed has a loyal group of owners, as we will discover...





## BREED PROFILES

● The breed's most iconic feature – the one referred to in the name – is the ridge of hair growing in the reverse direction along its spine. His ancestry is linked to the ancient dogs of the Khoikhoi people which possessed this same feature, which is instantly recognisable. Canine folklore suggested that a well-marked ridge was a sign of courage

● Rhodesian Ridgebacks are excellent guard dogs but do require consistent training, especially to avoid any dominance issues arising

● The breed has an expected lifespan of over 10 years

● He can be pretty standoffish with strangers, and has a rather spectacular and intimidating low growl if his protective urges come to the fore

● The breed standard states: 63cm (25in) desirable minimum height at withers; 69cm (27in) desirable maximum height at withers; bitches: 61cm (24in) desirable minimum height at withers, 66cm (26in) desirable maximum height at withers

● The breed is known to be affected by hip dysplasia and elbow dysplasia, and Kennel Club Assured Breeders must use the hip dysplasia and elbow dysplasia testing schemes when breeding. X-rays are used to look for abnormalities in the joints, which are graded depending on their condition. Kennel Club Assured Breeders are also required to perform the JME (Juvenile myoclonic epilepsy) DNA test, which screens the genes for a specific form of epilepsy

● They are intelligent and enjoy working





● Breed standard colours are: light wheaten, red wheaten, and wheaten

● They need grooming roughly once a week. They are a breed that sheds

● Rhodesian Ridgebacks need more than two hours of exercise per day

● Rhodesian Ridgebacks require a good amount of space, including a decent-sized garden. As a large, energetic dog you must make sure you have the time and space to train and exercise them properly as they do not respond well to boredom and harsh control

## WHAT IS IT REALLY LIKE TO LIVE WITH A RHODESIAN RIDGEBACK?

They are intelligent, loving, and listen well. But they are also big and strong and need good early training, especially on the lead. They love to sprint and chase, which can worry others if they aren't up for it but if they have a buddy who loves the same, they have a great time. They definitely need exercise and space and the opportunity to use their muscles. Ideal for an owner who is confident with dogs.

*Caroline Hutton*

They're sensitive souls so make sure you do the right kind of socialising, building their confidence from the beginning in different situations, with lots of positive reinforcement. Teenage boys are hard, so lots of management in adolescence! If you are getting a male, make sure you understand the difference between reactivity and understanding dogs' body language as they are more likely to react to other entire males while hormones are up so it's important you know how to prevent and manage these situations. Try to avoid neutering until past the two-year mark to prevent reactivity due to loss of confidence as they aren't the most confident breed.

*Kirstie Workman*

Rhodesian Ridgebacks are ludicrously intelligent. They're definitely not for anyone looking for an easy dog or for someone who wants one simply because of their beauty and ridge. You have to be prepared to put some serious work in from day one until their last. You will be rewarded with the best dog you've ever had.

*Abby Flanagan*

They are independent yet love a cuddle, and have sensitive personalities yet are stubborn at times. They will make you laugh and smile on a daily basis, as they're goofy and quirky in the best possible way. You must make sure they know who is boss with good training and boundaries from the outset but you must bear in mind their sensitive souls when it comes to training methods.

*Emily J Denson*

People are drawn to them and are confused by their ridges and think they have their hackles up!

They love a good walk or equally a good sofa. They are protective and loyal and often bond more strongly to one person in the household. Mine will not let anyone stroke her until she has sniffed them out first and decided if they are eligible to stroke her. They love kids.

They can also be destructive and anxious and may not cope with long periods of being left alone. Mine likes to be groomed and we use a rubber brush as nothing else seems to work. They can live with any animal as long as correct training is given. They can feel the cold so often need indoor and outdoor coats. I would always have a Ridgeback.

*Emma Watling and Ben Crane*

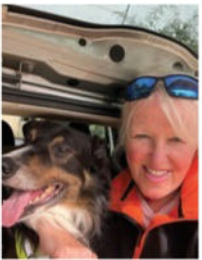




# Christmas getaways...

Some people love to escape for the festive season with their dogs. Here are three great ideas for holidays that will inspire you!

**Andrea McHugh** reports



Andrea McHugh is a freelance journalist and author of several dog-related books. She competes in agility and heelwork to music







Above: A tree guard helps to prevent curious dogs from investigating any gifts left by Santa!

Right: Rooster Barn has no limit on the number of canine guests

## EAST RUSTON HOLIDAY COTTAGES

### NORFOLK

Sue Allen runs the award-winning East Ruston Holiday Cottages in Norfolk which are all extremely dog-friendly and no extra charges are made for canine guests. Christmas is always a popular time of year, and every care is taken to ensure that dogs and owners have the best time, although there is also appreciation for guests who long for the season to be over and the new year to start.

“We have lots of fabulous properties – for example, there is Bristow’s Barn, which is a huge, converted thatched barn that is perfect for a family getaway, as it sleeps eight people in four bedrooms,” says Sue. “Last year, the Christmas tree in Bristow’s Barn was about 12 feet tall, with an amazing garland on the balcony and lots of twinkly lights.

“Another great Christmas stay is the wonderful Rooster Barn in the quiet village of Trunch. This is a real character property that sleeps four people, with unlimited dogs welcome. The owners love making the barn as Christmassy as possible! I’ve visited when the team have been preparing the property and it’s great because they have Christmas carols playing, and lots of mince pies to keep everyone energised!

“Many of our cottage owners provide special Christmas presents for the dogs and added extras for the

humans. I also pick up lots of handmade dog biscuit-filled stockings from a local lady, with all donations going to charity. I pop these stockings into all the cottages where our guests are repeat visitors, and of course everyone gets a card.

“However, we do acknowledge that not everyone wants to celebrate. Some people want to escape the festive season altogether, so we always ask if visitors want decorations or not. My heart goes out to those that do want to escape, as it is often due to loss or trauma that is associated with this time of year. Whatever their decision, we always ensure that guests and dogs are as comfortable and happy as possible during their stay.”

● For more information, visit: [eastrustoncottages.co.uk](http://eastrustoncottages.co.uk)



You are advised to do your research, talk to holiday let owners and check reviews prior to booking accommodation to ensure it is suitable for you and your dog. For more ideas on dog-friendly holidays, visit the *Your Dog Magazine* website: [yourdog.co.uk](http://yourdog.co.uk)





**DULAS GLAMPING**  
**MACHYNLLETH, NEAR POWYS, WALES**

If you really want to get away from it all, you might like to consider staying in this wheelchair-accessible double shepherd's hut which is in a stunning location with breathtaking mountain views. This very special place has been carefully created to provide a wonderful holiday for everyone, including families with autistic

children who need somewhere safe, secure, and designed to prevent sensory overload.

Pippa Knight, from Dulas Glamping, says: "My son has autism, and when he was much younger, would just run off with no idea of where he was going. It made it very difficult for us to find camping or glamping holiday accommodation, as we needed to keep him safe. This is why we came up with the idea of the double shepherd's hut, which sleeps up to five people with multiple dogs, and is really secure, with high fencing all the way round the large garden. There is a wheelchair-friendly wet room, and two sensory pods, which are basically little rooms with remote controlled twinkly ceiling lights to provide sanctuary for anyone needing time on their own.

"Although we decorate the hut for the festive season, we are minimalistic as we know some of our guests won't cope with a lot of additional stimulus. This is a beautiful, peaceful place with fantastic walks in the area. We can get deliveries from local superstores, and we're just 10 minutes from a supermarket, plus there is a weekly market.

"Christmas is always lovely as we have views of the distant mountains, which are often snowcapped in December. It's a really peaceful little haven, where people and their dogs – including reactive, giant breeds and XL types – can relax and enjoy a holiday. We can also move livestock out of view if dogs have high prey drive."

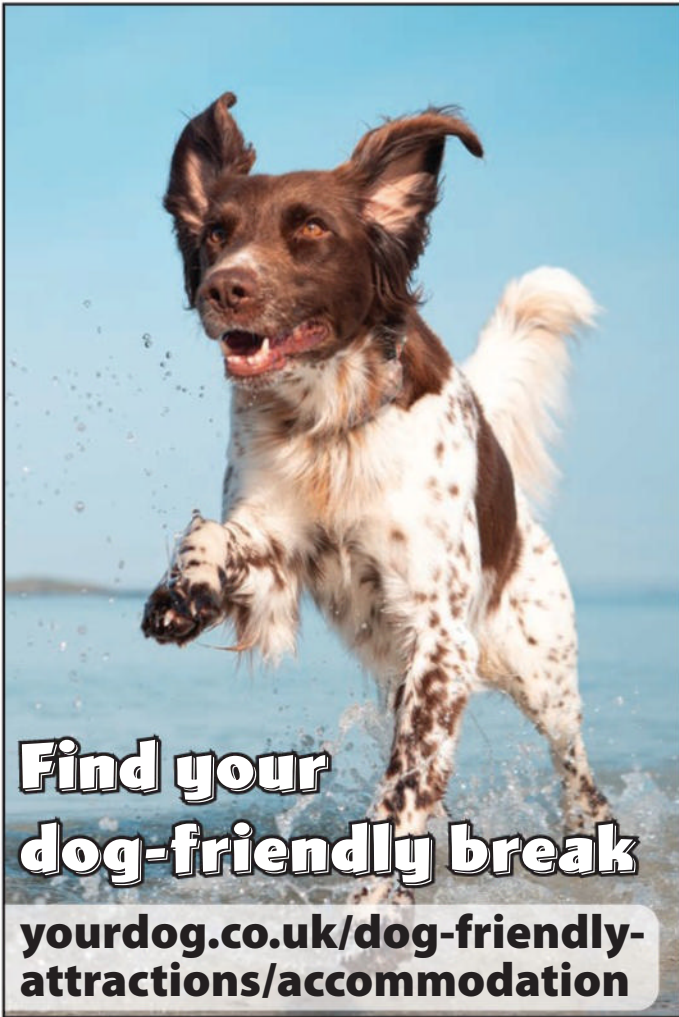
● For more information, visit Dulas Glamping on Facebook, telephone **07854 264245** or email **dulastent@outlook.com**



**Above: The decorations are kept to a minimum to prevent sensory overload**

**Right: The property is secure**





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**THE RETREAT AT GREENACRES**

**CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH, DERBYSHIRE**

The Retreat at Greenacres is a large, open-plan dog-friendly studio apartment, complete with log burner, fully equipped kitchen, and a comfortable super king-sized bed. The studio has its own patio and a hot tub with spa accessories, as well as a private wooded area to explore, with direct access to a secure dog exercise field.

Owner, Beth Newman, lives in the family home behind The Retreat and says: "This is a perfect base for exploring the Peak District, with wonderful walks that can be accessed from our dog field.

"We decorate the studio for the whole of December and enjoy making it look really festive. Our tree is artificial, which is safer for dogs, and is decorated two thirds of the way from the bottom to decrease the risk of ornament eating! I also place breeze blocks wrapped in festive paper over the tree's base to ensure it stays upright, despite having up to six dogs running around at times. All other decorations are placed above dog height. We provide festive treats for our human and canine guests, and anyone who stays here during Christmas week receives lots of little extras.

"I aim to provide a real 'home from home' experience and try to make Christmas as stress free as possible for our guests. I'm very happy to sort out grocery deliveries before guests arrive, so all anyone has to do is relax and enjoy the festivities. We can even arrange dog sitting for up to four hours if people want to go and visit some local attractions or one of the many Christmas markets."

● For more information, visit: [greenacresretreat.co.uk](http://greenacresretreat.co.uk)



Above: It's an open-plan studio apartment

Inset: A hamper for dog owners

Right: It's a home away from home

**TOP TIPS**

- If you don't enjoy the festive season, please don't be afraid to explain this to holiday owners before booking. You can also check if there is the opportunity to request that your accommodation is not decorated.
- When away from home, make sure that your dogs stay safe by storing any festive food out of reach.
- Wrap presents securely and avoid leaving them

under the tree or put a tree guard in place to deter curious canines!

- Remember that going away for Christmas can be anything that you want it to be. If you want to eat a bowl of cereal for lunch and then walk for miles without seeing another soul before curling up in front of the fire with your dog and a good book that's all entirely fine. Christmas is just one day of the year and 2025 will soon be here.



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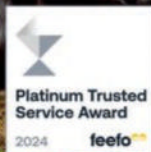
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# Functional foods



What are they and how do they impact our pets?  
Canine nutritionist **Jackie Boyd** explains



Jacqueline Boyd is an animal scientist, canine coach, nutritionist, writer, lecturer and Cocker Spaniel aficionado.

Above: Swapping a few treats for vegetables could help provide your dog with functional foods.

**T**he term ‘functional food’ has increasingly attracted a lot of attention in human nutrition and recently in canine nutrition, too. You might already have heard and seen the term ‘superfood’ used a lot, particularly in advertising, but the reality is that ‘superfood’ does not really have a clear definition, and indeed, often just represents ingredients that, by virtue of their biology, might have slightly higher levels of certain nutrients than other ingredients.

Functional foods, on the other hand, are increasingly recognised to be useful and beneficial, as part of the impact of diet and dietary components on health

and overall well-being, and is perhaps a more accurate term than ‘superfood.’

Let’s find out about functional foods – what they are and why they might be useful for our dogs.

## WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL FOOD?

Functional foods were first described in the 1980s and are defined as foods or food ingredients that provide essential nutrition, as well as additional benefits to health. There are two major classes of functional foods – those that occur naturally and those that are fortified in some way.

The naturally occurring functional foods contain specific

health-benefiting compounds such as vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, fibre, and other useful substances. Examples of natural functional foods include herbs, spices, fruits, vegetables, grains, seeds, and nuts.

Fortified functional foods are where a regular food or ingredient has been enhanced in some way with added nutrients or other substances that have health benefits. Often the fortification is intended to directly target a specific aspect of health, such as digestive health or skin and coat quality. Examples include adding probiotics, prebiotics, fatty acids (especially omega-3 fatty acids), and specific vitamins and minerals. Many commercially available dog foods can be considered as



fortified functional foods, because they are often supplemented with key ingredients to enhance their nutritional profile and value.

## HEALTH BENEFITS OF FUNCTIONAL FOODS

It is also possible to classify functional foods based on the areas of health and well-being that they support. You might hear of ingredients having benefits for the brain, heart, gut, and immune systems. Others will support joint health or have benefits for learning, cognition, and behaviour.

Typically, functional foods that are intended to support specific areas of health will be unique to that area. They might have other minor benefits across overall health and welfare, but functional foods will usually be found in specific combinations and their use will vary in different situations. For example, to support joint health, ingredients such as glucosamine, chondroitin, and green-lipped mussel might be combined with other substances. For digestive health, ingredients rich in prebiotic fibres might be combined with probiotic microorganisms.

Many functional foods are noted to be high in antioxidants – important substances that help to protect cells from the effects of free radicals that are released in the body naturally and are also found in the environment. High levels of free radicals cause oxidative stress, and this can make our dogs more susceptible to certain diseases and has an impact on ageing. Interestingly, older dogs who have increased levels of antioxidants in their diet appear to suffer lower severity of canine cognitive dysfunction (CCD) – a distressing condition similar to dementia in people. This increased level of dietary antioxidants can be provided by supplements or by feeding antioxidant-rich foods such as brightly coloured fruit and vegetables.

## HOW MUCH DO YOU NEED TO FEED?

One challenge with functional foods is that we don't really know how much of a natural functional food needs to be fed to our dogs

to really have an impact on health. This is because the levels of the key compounds are often quite low in the food, and you might need to feed your dog kilograms of the food per day to have an effect. This is clearly not viable and will also have the effect of unbalancing the rest of the diet. However, it is likely that using functional foods as treats and toppers can help to enhance your dog's overall dietary intake of beneficial substances.

Why not chop up some fresh vegetables and fruits, such as carrots, cucumber, apple, bell peppers, and tomatoes, and offer them as alternative training treats or as meal toppers? Most dogs enjoy the variety and while you might not be making enormous alterations to their overall nutrient intake, these ingredients will contribute to your dog's overall well-being.

Conversely, fortified functional foods tend to be much easier to understand how much needs to be fed for potential health benefits. This is because they will be prepared based on validated levels of key nutrients and formulated to be fed at levels that are suitable and appropriate. Specific supplements and pre-prepared foods will fall into this category.

## SHOULD I CONSIDER FUNCTIONAL FOODS FOR MY DOG?

You might already be feeding functional foods without being aware of it! If you feed a commercial dog food (of any type), have a look at the label. There might be ingredients in there that fulfil the functional food definition such



as prebiotics, vegetables, whole grains, seeds, and omega oils. If you want to feed additional functional foods, first consider what aspect of your dog's health you wish to benefit and then choose.

For example, older dogs might benefit from additional antioxidants in their diet from brightly pigmented plant ingredients and extracts. Dogs with joint and skin health concerns might benefit from elevated levels of omega-3 fatty acids in their diet. Digestive health can be aided by fibre-rich ingredients and probiotics, including those from fermented foods such as kefir. If your dog has a specific health condition under veterinary supervision, do chat to your vet first before making any extreme dietary changes, however.

Expect to see functional foods becoming more commonplace in the canine nutrition world as we learn more about their value and possible impacts on canine well-being.



## DID YOU KNOW?

● The use of functional foods aims to support overall good health and minimise the incidence of chronic disease.

● Functional foods are typically used to support specific areas of health such as digestion, skin and coat, joints, or the nervous system.

● Naturally occurring functional foods are those that contain specific nutrients at levels to support health and well-being, such as fruits and vegetables.

● Fortified functional foods are regular foods or ingredients that have been enhanced in some way with the addition of specific ingredients or individual nutrients such as vitamins and minerals.

Above right: Brightly coloured fruit and vegetables can make great meal toppers.

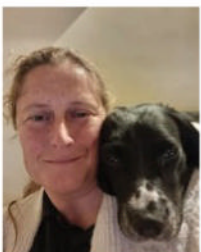
Right: Check the labels on your dog's foods – you might already be feeding functional foods!





# Losing fur

If your dog is losing fur, it can be distressing for you both — and a sign of a health problem. Vet **Vicky Payne** shares her experience



**ABOUT VICKY**  
Holistic vet, Vicky Payne BVetMed MRCVS, is based in East Sussex, and qualified from the Royal Veterinary College in 2001. She uses a range of complementary therapies alongside conventional medicine and surgery

**W**hen most people think of a healthy dog, they imagine a glossy coat. Coat changes and hair loss can be very distressing for owners, and it can indicate health problems.

Tyson is a typical bouncy Boxer who I saw last year for his annual vaccination and health check. His owner was concerned about hair loss along his sides that had started about a month before. She hadn't brought him in any earlier as Tyson wasn't itchy and otherwise seemed really well. I examined Tyson and the hair loss was the only issue I could find.

I suggested that we did a blood test to rule out any underlying health problems. The blood tests all came back within normal limits, so I explained that the most likely diagnosis was seasonal flank alopecia. The cause of this hair loss is not well understood, and as the name suggests, the hair grows back and may be lost again at the same time next year. Some dogs respond to melatonin supplementation but this should only be used with veterinary supervision.

At first glance, Bluebell the Staffie, who I saw recently, had similar hair loss to Tyson. Her hair

was thin on her sides, but also on her neck and her ears. She also had scurfy skin and a few small pustules. Bluebell is only two and had no other health issues so I didn't suggest any blood tests. The most likely cause for Bluebell's hair loss is colour dilute alopecia (CDA) due to her blue coat colour. Dogs with CDA can have abnormal hair follicles which stop producing hairs. Like seasonal alopecia, there is no cure, but Bluebell's condition can be managed. Changing from a leather collar to a fleece harness has reduced hair breakage and pustule formation around her neck, and bathing with an oatmeal



shampoo every two weeks has reduced the scale and itching. Dilute colours like blue, fawn, and lilac are very popular, but puppy buyers need to be aware of the risk of CDA.

A much itchier, balding patient was Jack Russell, Timmy. He came in with scabby ears and armpits, and patchy fur loss on his legs. Timmy enjoys a rural lifestyle and sniffing out foxes in the brambles so I was suspicious about sarcoptic mange. I enjoy looking at samples under the microscope and was excited to find fox mange mites in the scabs! Timmy's owner was less excited, but pleased that we could use a monthly parasite spot-on to cure the problem.

A more difficult type of mange to treat is demodectic mange. All dogs will have some demodectic mange mites in their hair follicles, but in young puppies and immune-suppressed dogs the population can get out of hand, causing severe itching, hair loss (especially around the eyes and feet), and skin thickening. Treatment can be complicated

## “All dogs will have some demodectic mange mites in their hair follicles...”

and may include oral parasite treatments at a higher than usual frequency and skin washes.

Last on my list of patients with bald spots were Hunter and Poppy, both Golden Retrievers who were booked in for 'losing clumps of fur' but who both had very different diagnoses. Poppy is a young dog who came in with a big red oozing bald spot on her hip. This was most likely to be a 'hot spot' or superficial pyoderma caused by Poppy nibbling at herself. These can be caused by insect bites or scratches, or be a symptom of an underlying allergy. Poppy responded well to topical treatment but if she has recurrent hot spots, we will do further investigations and may need to treat her for allergic skin disease.

Hunter is a much older Goldie, and his pyoderma was less angry looking, but more extensive with

lots of small sore areas alongside healing scabs and flaking skin. Hunter had also gained weight since his last visit, and his owner said he wasn't as active. After a thorough examination and some blood tests, I diagnosed an underactive thyroid as the cause of Hunter's skin infections. He needed some shampoo for the sores, but treating his thyroid condition has given him a new lease of life and a much healthier coat and skin.

Changes in coat condition can be normal. Neutered and older dogs often become a bit fluffy with retained coat, and double coated breeds can become dull before their big shed in the spring. But changes to the skin and coat can also be symptoms of a range of health problems so always consult your vet if you are concerned about your dog's coat.



**Opposite page: Skin problems can be a sign of an underlying health problem**

**Right: There are a range of treatments for skin issues**





# MAKE THE BED...

This month's discussion with expert trainer **Tony Cruse** is all about dog beds. How can we use them to manage our dogs' lives?

Interview by Michael Hallam (MH)



Tony Cruse, Your Dog's expert trainer.

**MH: What type of dog beds are available and does it actually make a difference what we buy?**

**TC:** My rough definition of a dog bed is anything that your dog chooses to sleep on. Anything from a bean bag, a mattress type, oval shapes, donut shapes, and even ones that resemble a pyramid. Dogs like safety and they like something that's comfortable. It's really the dog that decides what is comfy. Back in the seventies, I had a dog that slept quite comfortably in an old milk crate.

**MH: Can a puppy have a dog bed? And what are we looking for when we make that first purchase?**

**TC:** There's a good chance a puppy is going to chew up the bed and lose control of their bowels, so don't go too expensive with one. With a puppy, some old blankets will often do. You can crate train your puppy and you just need a couple of towels at the bottom of the crate. Just make it snug, really.

It's not going to make any difference in terms of what we

choose at that age to whether they'll like certain type of dog beds. Just concentrate on the puppy stage and make them comfortable with blankets.

**MH: I want to bust this myth – there are mixed views on crates as to whether dogs find them appealing or if it's a bit cruel. What are your thoughts?**

**TC:** It's a good point to bring this up. Some people call them a cage. I mean, they resemble a cage, but you can make them very, very cosy,



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## “When a dog chooses to go into that safe space, completely ignore them”

and they then become a den.

You've got to make it appealing for the dog. The big tip I give owners, especially for puppies, is to open the door of the crate and cable tie it open. So, in the early days, it never shuts, because the most off-putting thing for a puppy is to go into his crate and then the door shuts, and he's trapped. You want the dog or the puppy to voluntarily go in and out as many times as possible. You can even feed your dog or your puppy in there. Then, once the dog's chosen to go in there, it becomes a sleeping point – a den – and you can take that crate with you wherever you go. That's a dog bed.

In the latter years of my dog, I took the door off. It still amazes me how he even fitted into it because it was a puppy crate. Every night, he

went in it of his own accord and he curled up very tight like dogs do. He loved it. You'll be surprised where a dog chooses to sleep, but that was his choice. With any bed, they'll let you know if they're happy with it, so listen to your dog.

**MH: If there are sceptics out there, saying how did wild dogs ever manage without fancy dog beds, what would you say?**

**TC:** It's quite interesting when you look into it. Canine ancestors tended to dig little troughs. They'd pick somewhere that's safe, away from danger, and they'd dig a little trough into the earth, which might make it a little bit warm. It's often why I think you see your own dog pawing at or roughing up the dog bed. They'll also go around in a circle a few times before they lay

down. There is a theory that a wild dog would do that just to make the patch of earth a little bit warmer and push out any pests.

**MH: That's fascinating. Does that mean for our own dogs that where we put dog beds is really important?**

**TC:** They'll often go to a place that they feel is secure, where there's less footfall. It's often a corner of the room or by the wall. It's usually never where we think it will be, so the best tip is to make a note of where your dog chooses to lay down during the day. Often at night, people tend to put the dog into the kitchen because usually it's near the water bowl, which is important so the dog can have a drink during the night. Also, if there are any accidents, kitchens are usually quite easy to clean up.

**MH: There seems to be more to it than just a sleeping spot. Can a bed be a retreat for a dog?**

**TC:** Yes. You'll often see when a dog's feeling anxious, he'll go off



Opposite page: Expect puppies to chew and toilet in their first bed!

Right: When a dog is on their bed, leave them be





to his bed. A bit like when we get stressed, we need a place to go to and just shut the door for 10 minutes. In dog training, we call it a safe haven. Dogs need that little place where they can go. First of all, it helps them calm down. Secondly, it tells us that they're anxious. So, it's very important the bed is not just a place to sleep in, but it's a place they can go to get away. Let's just say you get the vacuum cleaner out; it can be quite a scary thing to dogs. So, they choose to go into the dog bed.

**MH: How do you encourage your dog to see their bed as their haven?**

**TC:** When a dog chooses to go into that safe space, completely ignore them. The worst thing you can do when they're in bed is get the whole family around and start stroking them. They need a place where they can go just to get away. I always tell my customers if they've got children, tell the children that when the dog is in their bed, that the dog's almost invisible. If a dog cannot leave a particular situation, that's when you get the growling and we certainly don't want

growling around children.

If your dog's not going into their safe haven of a bed too often, you can put a couple of treats in there just to encourage him in. A safe haven is often chosen by the dog. You can put a bed in a particular location, but you might have to work to his preferences.

**MH: You've got the safe haven. What'd you do if your dog refuses to use it?**

**TC:** Location, location, location. Keep it safe. If your dog's still a little bit reluctant, you can kind of lace it with treats. You could even feed your dog on it for a little while. Just get your dog used to being on it. If all those tips don't work, then you've probably got the wrong dog bed.

**MH: What happens if you ever need to change the location of the bed? You know, for example, if you do some building work.**

**TC:** A good point. If the dog's already familiar with the bed, that's the beauty of the bed. You can take it anywhere in the house and the dog's odour's on it. The dog's used to it. In theory, the dog then should

sleep on it.

The dog should still see that as a safe, familiar place. For example, my dog slept in his crate. That was his bed and it was his choice. Even when he was bigger than a puppy, he still managed to fit in somehow, and we took the crate door off. There are many hotels that I stayed at during courses. I took the crate with me and he quite happily went into that overnight. So, the beauty is once the dog's happy and familiar with the dog bed, there's a good chance you can move locations with it and your dog will still feel safe and secure in it.

**MH: They say you should never wake a sleeping dog. What if you're in a situation where you've got a vet appointment and you need to wake him? How would you go about that situation?**

**TC:** I've had many customers being bitten when they've tried to wake a dog quickly. It's a dog's first instinct to defend themselves and it's a natural behaviour. It's very important that when you absolutely must wake a dog, you do it gently. If it's a sudden awakening, many dogs, not all dogs, will react in an

Above: The right dog bed is a brilliant resource for you and your dog



## “We can use dog beds as what we call stationing points”

aggressive or defensive way.

My previous dog, Motley, was completely deaf and the way we woke him up was to just gently blow on his face and he came around very slowly. They do say let sleeping dogs lie; unless you have to wake the dog up then, then don't.

**MH: Beds can be used as a key part of their training. Explain how this works.**

**TC:** We can use dog beds as what we call stationing points. So, let's say you dropped your portion of chips all over the floor. Your dog's about to launch himself and help you clean them up. If you've trained your dog well, you can say 'In your bed' and your dog will make his way to his bed, leaving you to safely clean up the chips. The way we train this is using the cue 'In your bed.'

You've got to say it in a nice way. It should never be a punishment. You should never send your dog to his bed as a punishment because then why would he want to get in it again? So, we teach it in a very kind,

positive way. We'll say 'In your bed' and we'll throw a treat into his bed a few times. Eventually, we'll say in his bed, point to it, and as he goes into your bed, you then put a treat on his bed when he's in there. Your dog associates that 'if I go to my bed, I get the good stuff.' You can also keep him in there a bit longer. So, you say 'In your bed,' and as he goes into his bed, you drop a chew into the bed. While he's chewing stuff, it becomes a better place to be.

There are many situations in which you can use this idea of his bed as a stationing point. It might be that the doorbell goes and the Amazon deliverer is about to step in with a few parcels. You can just say 'In your bed' and your dog moves away from the front door. He stations himself in his bed. It could be before you feed your dogs. Nobody likes a dog that's jumping up as you're preparing his meal. So, it's 'In your bed' and then the dog goes into his bed, knowing that in a moment he's going to rush out and get the best reward, which is his dinner. It could even

be used in emergencies, such as you've dropped a load of aspirin on the floor.

So, it's a good one to teach. But remember, it should never be said in a harsh tone. It should always be a fun tone and a fun exercise for your dog to do.

**MH: To round up, there's a wealth of dog beds on the market. It's important to choose something your dog likes, and ensure it becomes a safe haven and a resource you can use to manage situations – does that sum up the value of a good dog bed?**

**TC:** You need to get the set-up correct. Often, the simplest dog bed is something that resembles a very thin mattress or a crate-type set-up. As I mentioned, in the wild, they would dig kind of an oval-shaped pit. So that's why the dog beds are often kind of oval shaped. If your dog doesn't like the bed you chose, try a different type of bed.

It's a valuable item to the dog but also to us. We can use it for many beneficial reasons. It's a resource for when you need time to calm a situation or have some space away from your dog, and something that you take with you on his travels.



Right: Crates can be a real cosy den





Toni Shelbourne has over three decades of experience working with dogs and wild canids. She is an Animal Behaviourist (Full member of INTODogs & ICAN), Tellington TTouch Instructor, Real Dog Yoga instructor, and author. She lives in Oxfordshire, England. For more information about Toni, her work and books, visit [tonishelbourne.co.uk](http://tonishelbourne.co.uk)



# Barking mad

Barking, why do they do it and what can you do if it becomes excessive? Animal Behaviourist and Tellington TTouch Instructor **Toni Shelbourne** explains





**A** bark is a communication and is a normal behaviour for dogs. We have bred them for thousands of years to alert us to danger in the environment or to aid us to do a job. However, in this modern age a barking dog can be a nuisance to close neighbours and challenging to live with. The key to helping your dog reduce the frequency or intensity of this communication is to work out what the underlying emotion or cause is. Dogs bark for multiple reasons, including:

- **Fear - alarm barking**
- **Loneliness.** Does he bark when left alone?
- **To find out where you are**  
He might panic if he feels he is

separated from you

- **Over-arousal/excitement.**
- **Greeting.** This is a normal bonding ritual
- **Responding to others.** Is he chatting to a dog a few streets over?
- **Attention – because a need hasn't been met.** This could be needing more social interaction, or mental or physical exercise
- **Demand barking – because it works in getting what he or she wants**
- **Lost**
- **Frustration.** Is a toy stuck under furniture, does your dog need something he or she doesn't have access to, like an outdoor space or are you too slow at rewarding him or her for a job?
- **Boredom.** Does he or she have enough to occupy them during the day?
- **Play.** We like to laugh when playing so why can't a dog bark!
- **Responding to a noise in the environment: doorbell, emergency sirens, church bells, etc.**
- **Pain.** Does your dog have a health condition that is causing him or her to bark excessively?
- **Confusion – seen in elderly dogs if they are showing signs of cognitive decline**
- **Territorial.** Does your dog bark at people and dogs walking by your house?
- **Canine Compulsive Disorder.** Is it a compulsion which is rooted in a

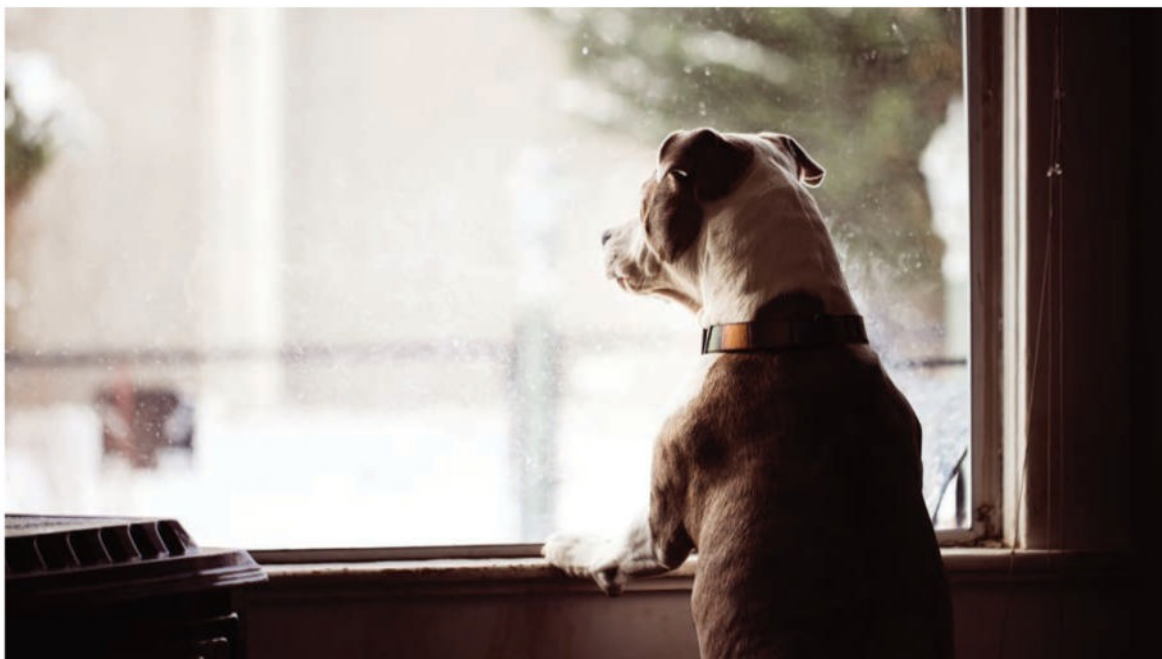
psychological issue?

Dogs bark, just like we speak. You can't expect a dog never to vocalise. The key is to work out what is normal and what is excessive. Once you understand why your dog is excessively barking you can devise a training or relief plan.

How do you know if your dog barks excessively or compulsively? Track how often he or she barks, how long for, and how easy is it to calm the bark. Also, is the vocalisation directed at something, someone, at a particular time of day, etc? Once you have worked out what the bark is related to, you can help your dog change their reaction, or only bark for just a few repetitions before stopping.

Each and every one of the reasons listed will need a different approach. As will every dog who is a unique being with emotional needs. Using an anti-bark device, spraying him or her with water or shouting at your dog won't deal with the underlying cause and using aversive methods will only damage your relationship with your dog. You are placing a plaster over a wound that is too deep for it to deal with.

Once you understand where the need to excessively bark is coming from, you can seek professional help from a qualified behaviourist who will help you change the emotion or cause behind it.



**Opposite page: When does barking become excessive?**

**Above: If your dog is barking in the garden it may be linked to a territorial behaviour or he may just be frightened of something he can hear but not see**

**Right: Boredom, arousal, or frustration may be just some of the reasons your dog may bark at things that pass by your house**



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# Dog Answers

A healthy dog is a happy dog.  
Read our Q&As to ensure your pet stays in top form

## What's causing his itchy skin?

**Q** My Beagle, Louis, got a skin infection recently, and the vet prescribed anti-inflammatory corticosteroid cream and some steroids. Although Louis stopped scratching, the fur still hasn't grown back and he's since had another bout. The vet has now said this could be due to allergies.

**Are there any skin conditions Beagles are prone to?**

**A** It is impossible to determine what is causing your dog's itchy skin and patches of hair loss, as a number of diseases could be involved.

Consider further investigation into Louis' problem, as only when you know the cause will you be able to determine the best way to treat it.

You could try him on a hypo-allergenic diet from your vet for four to six weeks (nothing else other than water should pass his lips) and see if this improves things. If a food allergy trial makes no difference, then blood or skin allergy testing may be helpful, as there may be specific allergens in the environment which are causing these skin problems.

Failing that, it might be worth having a biopsy sample taken from an affected area and examined microscopically.



A number of diseases can cause skin complaints



**The risks of bloat**

**Q** I'm absolutely devastated at the loss of my three-year-old Great Dane. Boris was fit and healthy until he suddenly became ill. I noticed that his stomach had become bloated and he was very lethargic, so I took him to the vet's, who suspected Boris had gastric torsion so kept him in overnight. I had a call the following morning to tell me he had died. I was aware of this condition and knew it affected deep-chested breeds, but I had no idea that it could happen so quickly or that it could be fatal. Were there any signs I should have noticed earlier, or were there any preventative measures I should have taken?

Deep-chested breeds are prone to bloat

Place a tennis ball in your dog's food bowl to slow his eating down

**A** Bloat, or gastric dilation, can follow fermentation of food

in the stomach, which causes swelling of the abdomen, and can result in burping and unsuccessful attempts to vomit. As the stomach swells, it may rotate and constrict its own blood supply, which can cause circulatory collapse, toxicity, weakness, and collapse. Death due to shock combined with altered electrolyte levels can follow rapidly. Some dogs treated in the early stages recover, but irreversible damage can occur within about four hours.

Risk factors in prone breeds (deep-chested, large breed dogs such as Great Danes) include too big a meal eaten too fast, and eating and drinking too close to exercise. Feeding several small meals a day and avoiding exercise within an hour

of mealtimes can be helpful. In addition, eating should be slowed with an anti-gulp bowl, or by putting toys in with the food.



**Time to spay?**

**Q** My Labrador is due to have her next season soon. I would like to get her spayed because I won't breed from her in the future. I'd like to get it done this year, but is it best to get her spayed before or after her next season?

**A** The best time to spay a bitch is halfway between seasons when her uterus has the least blood supply and her hormone levels have decreased.

This reduces the risk of surgical complications and hormonal dysfunction. Since most bitches have a season approximately every six months, we usually plan to spay a bitch three months after a season.

Spaying has many benefits



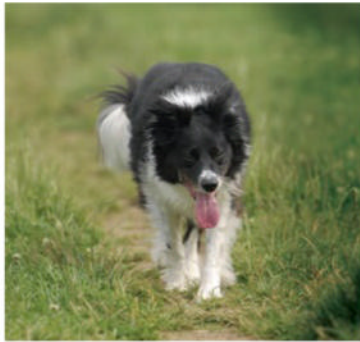
**SPAYING — THE FACTS**

- Neutering in bitches (known as spaying) involves the surgical removal of the whole reproductive system, from the ovaries to the cervix.
- An operation called ovariectomy is carried out under anaesthetic, where the

- abdomen is opened and the womb and ovaries are taken away.
- Following the procedure, the bitch will no longer have seasons and will be unable to get pregnant.
- Benefits of spaying include avoiding unwanted puppies, greatly decreased chances of

- developing mammary tumours in later life, and helping to control behavioural problems such as aggression and hyperactivity.
- Older unspayed bitches are also prone to a life-threatening infection of the womb called pyometra.





### Managing joint problems

**Q** My three-year-old Labrador began limping on his front leg recently so I took him to my vet. I assumed he had pulled or sprained something. To my horror, the vet said both elbows were swollen and suspected my dog had elbow dysplasia.

**X-rays confirmed the worst. My dog already has a lot of arthritic change so the recommended course of treatment is pain-relief injections, food supplements, and painkillers.**

**I'm absolutely heartbroken. My dog is still happy to go for his walks but salivates and pants soon after being out. The vet said as he gets older he will struggle to walk and it will become a question of quality of life and making a tough**

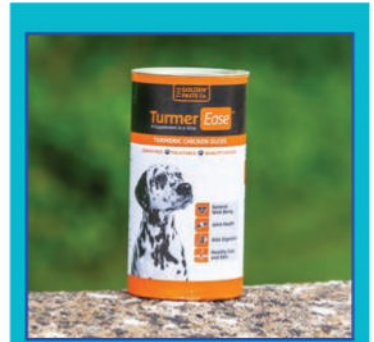
Keep an eye on your dog's panting if he has joint problems

**decision. How long is he likely to have?**

**A** Panting can be a sign of pain, so it is worth monitoring in dogs with joint disease. While it is devastating to get a diagnosis of joint problems in a dog so young, there are lots of things you can do to help him now that you know about his problem.

Some Labs with severe joint problems do well for years. A multifaceted approach generally works best, and weight management and carefully controlled levels of regular exercise (such as three short walks every day rather than one long one) can be combined with pain relief, glucosamine supplements, and, in some cases, complementary therapies.

Acupuncture may aid pain management; advice can be sought from a veterinary physiotherapist on appropriate exercises to maintain joint mobility; and regular hydrotherapy can help keep affected joints mobile and comfortable while maintaining muscle strength. You may find that your dog benefits from any or all of these approaches depending on how severe his problem is.



### Useful product

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### Tummy troubles

**Q** My Dachshund, Elsa, is always getting a stomach infection. I've taken her to the vet's but we don't know why she keeps getting it. She eats wet food in pouches.

**A** In healthy dogs, tummy upsets generally crop up only rarely if, for instance, a dog eats something he shouldn't and gets a little diarrhoea and/or vomiting as a consequence. However, frequent bouts of diarrhoea and vomiting may relate to a dog's food not suiting him. It may be worth gradually changing your dog on to a blander food such as one based on chicken and rice or lamb and rice. Dry food is sometimes easier to digest than wet.

Choose rice-based foods for dogs who get frequent diarrhoea

Other causes of recurrent tummy upsets include worms, low-grade infections, and inflammatory diseases such as irritable bowel disease and internal abnormalities.

First, I'd advise that you make sure your dog's worming is up to date — you should use an effective product every three months. Failing that, it may be worth trying a plainer food and cutting out all titbits.

If that doesn't work then I'd recommend that you drop a faecal sample into your vet's (first ask them for a sterile pot to put it in) so that they can send it off to a lab for

analysis. Some blood tests and other investigations might also be needed to enable your vet to get to the bottom of this and hopefully stop Elsa getting an upset tummy.





# Rescue dogs looking for homes

Could one of these lovely rescue dogs be for you?



## From Dogs Trust

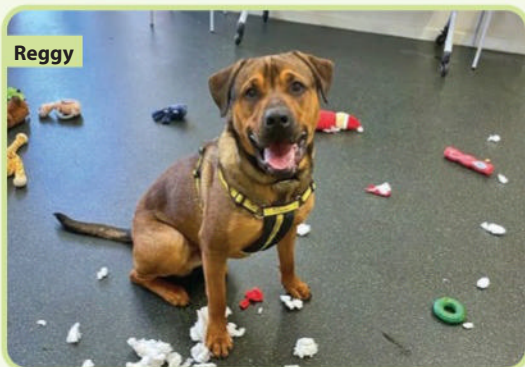
- **Name: Ruby (female)**
- **Age: 5 – 7 years**
- **Breed: Cavalier King Charles Spaniel**

Ruby is super friendly with new people and dogs alike. Ruby loves to explore and adventure to new places, sniffing around, and having fun. She loves spending quality time with her favourite people and enjoys fuss and cuddles all day long.

Ruby needs a patient family who can treat her like a princess. She would like her family to be around for most of the day while she settles into her new home. Ruby can live with another dog and small furrries in the home. She can also live with children in the home, as long as interactions are managed. She doesn't mind if there isn't a garden, providing she gets enough exercise. She is fully house-trained.

Ruby does have some medical considerations, including a heart murmur, that will require lifelong medication and additional costs. Adopters will receive a vet call to discuss her medical considerations in detail.

- **To find out more, visit [dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/spaniel-cavalier-king-charles/3454543](https://dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/spaniel-cavalier-king-charles/3454543)**



- **Name: Reggy (male)**
- **Age: 2 – 5 years**
- **Breed: Rottweiler cross**

Reggy is a friendly, clumsy, and affectionate goofball who adores people. He'll need an active family, where the youngest family members are over the age of 18, who can manage his size and strength. Reggy would best be suited to walking in less-frequented areas, as he is still learning how to control his frustration when he sees other dogs nearby. He's a great traveller in the car, which is ideal if walks are not easily accessed from his new home. Reggy must be the only pet and requires a secure garden to bound around in and burn off some steam. The Dogs Trust team can imagine that he'll enjoy chilling out with you on the sofa in the evenings, after a day packed full of fun activities to keep his energetic nature satisfied. .

- **To find out more, visit [dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/rottweiler/1265923](https://dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/rottweiler/1265923)**



- **Name: Maggy (female)**
- **Age: Over 8 years old**
- **Breed: Greyhound**

Maggy adores the company of her humans, but it may take her a while to show off her true, sweet, and loving character. Due to her nervous nature, she will be looking for a home where the youngest members of her family are over the age of 16. While unable to live with cats, Maggy is happy to live with a well-suited dog. She is currently living with her good friend Scooby Doo and would be happy to continue this living arrangement if her potential adopters would consider offering their home to two long-legged beauties! Travelling in the car and walking next to traffic are areas that Maggy finds particularly challenging. Her new family should be physically able to lift her into a car in case of emergencies, and should be based locally in Sussex, so that she doesn't have to travel too far. Her new abode should have a decent-sized garden for her to zoom about in. Leaving her alone at home should be built up very gradually.

- **To find out more, visit [dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/greyhound/1166388](https://dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/greyhound/1166388)**



**Underdogs!** These are dogs who have been with Dogs Trust a little longer or need some extra attention...



Neville

- **Neville (male)**
- **Age: 3**
- **Breed: Greyhound**

Neville is looking for a home with adults and to be the only pet in the home. He loves to travel in the car. Neville was house-trained, though he may need a refresher in a new home. Neville would best suit a quiet home environment with a garden. He may take time to settle in. He is used to having company so time left alone will need to be built up gradually once he has settled.

Neville is always happy to see you. He is affectionate and adores a fuss, he will lean into you for a stroke. He loves walks and plods along gently right by your side. He has visited quiet local cafés. Neville is not a fan of walking in the rain. He has great name response, and he knows 'Sit'. Neville has been trained to happily wear a muzzle when out on his walks. Neville is an absolute couch potato and loves nothing more than stretching out and taking naps.

● **To find out more, visit**  
[dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/greyhound/1257472](https://dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/greyhound/1257472)



Odie

- **Odie (male)**
- **Age: 5 – 7 years**
- **Breed: Dalmatian cross**

Odie is a beautiful six-year-old Dalmatian-cross who is an absolute superstar with anyone that can give him the time, love, and reassurance he needs. Odie is very sweet but does have some worries, so needs to live in an adult-only home as the only pet. He is very soppy with people, as long as new introductions are taken gradually. He also loves his training, and the treats that come with it! He will need a dedicated family that will be able to be home with him all the time. Odie can be particularly worried on walks and so a secure garden is an absolute must for him. He is walked muzzled but has no problem with this. He is on medication to help lower his anxiety levels, and this will need to be continued in the home. He's made amazing progress and is ready to find his forever home.

● **To find out more, visit**  
[dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/dalmatian/1247593](https://dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/dalmatian/1247593)



Ace

- **Ace (male)**
- **Age: 7**
- **Breed: Staffordshire Bull Terrier**

Meet awesome Ace, an adorable seven-year-old Staffie who is on the lookout for a loving adult-only home. Ace prefers a calm environment, as he feels uneasy around other dogs. He has made great strides in learning to wear a muzzle, which he will need to use during walks while remaining on lead. A secure garden would be perfect for Ace, giving him the freedom to enjoy off-lead fun. It is essential for visitors to let him come to them in his own time. Ace is a super sweet boy who transforms into a cuddly lap dog once he gets to know you! He has a big appetite and enjoys treat-based games that allow him to sniff out tasty morsels. If you can offer Ace the love and patience he deserves, you will be rewarded with a loyal and affectionate companion.

● **To find out more, visit**  
[dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/terrier-staffordshire-bull/3032085](https://dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/terrier-staffordshire-bull/3032085)



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# Q&A special



Julie Stone,  
Head of Animal  
Operations at Bath Cats  
and Dogs Home

## Q How can I help my three-year old Labrador stop guarding his food? He is the only dog in the house.

**A** Dogs guard what is precious to them but what has a high value to them will depend on each dog. For some it may be biscuits, a chew, a toy, or their sofa space. They may have learned over time to be possessive of their items because they were taken away from them in the past. Other dogs are just insecure and guard items as a result of anxiety.

### What does guarding behaviour look like?

- Standing, leaning, or putting a paw over the item
- Whale eye – showing the whites of their eyes while watching you
- Growling, barking, showing teeth, or snapping
- Taking their possession away to create distance between you and it

### Food guarding

Food is understandably a high-value resource to a dog as it is essential for their survival. Never make a dog's mealtime an area of conflict – food and treat times should be one of the highlights of their day. It is as simple as giving a dog space when they are eating and understanding the moment that we give the dog their food, it is theirs and needs to be treated as such. By giving dogs space, we remove any issues arising, as aggression is only used by dogs to create distance.

### How you can help

- Give your dog space while they are eating
- Never take food or treats away from your dog
- Keep children away at mealtimes – use a separate room or gates
- In multi-dog homes, let them have a bowl each and place them at a distance from each other

● If guarding is extreme or getting worse, seek the advice of a qualified Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist (CCAB).

### Further training for those dogs who need it

Find treats your dog loves, something of even higher value than their regular food, like fresh meat or cheese. Sit on a chair at a distance your dog is comfortable with and every five seconds throw a treat towards your dog's bowl. The idea is to be relaxed and not stare at your dog or pay any attention except for the second you are throwing the food. If you repeat this training every few days, over time your dog will be excited to see you sitting there as they have learned tasty food appears when you are in the room when they are eating. Don't move closer or touch them to keep that trust that you have earned.

Crate training can be useful to allow your dog to safely enjoy their favourite treats. Alternatively, provide a safe place such as a utility room with a baby gate across the doorway, where your dog can curl up on their bed and relax with a chew stick. If your dog is enjoying a treat in their safe place, then pass by and throw in an even higher-value treat to create a positive association with a person appearing.

If you continue to build a good relationship with your dog, he will know he can completely trust you. Try consistent interactions, and lots of reward-based obedience training as this will give you both a communication language that you can use.



Food guarding is often a sign of insecurity

**Bath  
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You can visit [bcdh.org.uk/pet-care-advice](http://bcdh.org.uk/pet-care-advice) to view or download its guidance sheets.



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● For more information, visit [ydolo.co.uk](http://ydolo.co.uk)

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2  
TO WIN

## HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win these fabulous prizes, enter online by visiting [yourdog.co.uk/freebies](http://yourdog.co.uk/freebies), quote the code GIG24DEC, and follow the instructions on screen. The closing date for entries is December 15, 2024 (UK only). Please note, you can enter online from November 7, 2024.

For full competition terms and conditions, visit [warnersgroup.co.uk/competition-terms](http://warnersgroup.co.uk/competition-terms)



Enter here!





If I pass away

**Canine Cared For** 

If I move to a care home

**Canine Cared For** 

If I receive a life-changing diagnosis

**Canine Cared For** 

# Make sure your dog is cared for with a **Canine Care Card**

You've always done what you can to protect your four legged friend, and that shouldn't change when life does. With a Canine Care Card, you won't have to worry about what's next for them, because we will look after and rehome them at one of our 21 rehoming centres, located all across the UK.

**Apply online to get your FREE Canine Care Card at: [dogstrust.org.uk/ccc](https://dogstrust.org.uk/ccc)**  
**E: [ccc@dogstrust.org.uk](mailto:ccc@dogstrust.org.uk) or T: 020 7837 0006**

Please quote **"336058"**, or complete this coupon:



**Please send me a Dogs Trust Canine Care Card application form**  
(Please fill out in block capitals)

Title	First Name
Surname	
Address	
Postcode	336058

From time to time we would like to send you exciting updates about our work, products, services and how you can support us, including fundraising activities and research by post. If you'd rather not receive these mailings, please tick here

In order to communicate with you more effectively, better understand your preferences and ability to support our work, we may analyse your data. We do share your information within the Dogs Trust Group; currently Dogs Trust Worldwide, Dogs Trust Ireland and Dogs Trust Promotions. To read our full privacy policy visit [dogstrust.org.uk/privacy](https://dogstrust.org.uk/privacy).

Please send this coupon to: **FREEPOST DOGSTRUSTL** (No stamp required.)  
N.B. Service only available for residents of the UK, Ireland, Channel Islands & Isle of Man.



**A dog is for life®**  
**[dogstrust.org.uk](https://dogstrust.org.uk)**

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