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# NEWSLETTER

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**Christmas 2020**  
**Number 69**

## Dear Friends

Meet **Colin**! He's a Huacaya Alpaca, he's nine years old and lives with his Alpaca family of Rudi, Tulkas and Pippin near Newton Abbot in Devon with **Paul** and **Karen Huntington** and he loves apples and carrots. If he or his family need us, we'll be here for them along with friends Scout the Labrador, Mabel the Newfoundland, two cats, and seventeen Call Ducks and Miniature Silver Appleyards!



I was looking for something happy and forward looking to start the newsletter and up popped Colin in the mail bag – who could resist a smile!

You've probably guessed that if we thought we'd been busy before – press the reset button! A great mix of views to share with you and, I hope, much to cheer.

## Christmas Card

All the restrictions meant it wasn't possible to take the photos Linda would need to create a new card. We've had so many super cards, so we took a vote at HQ to choose four to present, this year, in a mixed pack of 'specials' containing two of each. The winners were Christmas Post (2017), Christmas Pudding (2015), Christmas Sleigh Ride (2016), and Christmas Snowman (2009).





Some of the stars are still enjoying life at the sanctuaries.



Josephine



Sammy



Matty



Harry



Charles



Timmy



Simba



Thistle



Moby



Bertie



Nala and Pumba



## Catalogue

Delicious eats, unusual gifts and, I hope, something for everyone! Liqueur Truffles are on my list and Champagne Pudding, doggy toys, doggy biscuits and the seed balls....



### CT '100 Club

Winners who have each received £25 are: Apr: **Jan Roche** (Sussex), May: **Carol Dalrymple** (Northamptonshire) June: **Avis Balmer** (Lancashire), July: **Paula Kettle** (Warwickshire), Aug: **Andrea Aldam** (Devon) and Sept: **Jane Wells** (North Somerset). Forms for the new start are enclosed. If you pay by standing order and wish to continue, just send the forms back marked 'existing standing order' and we'll send you your new lucky number.



### Fundraising Events

All your schemes and plots and plans – scuppered! But, before the scuppering, there were some events and fundraisers to celebrate and congratulate....

**SEIB** (Essex) are part of the **Ecclesiastical Insurance Group** which gives employees the opportunity to nominate a charity to receive a gift from the company's charity initiative. **Sue Robb** chose us, and we have received £125. **Suzanne Gammon** and team at **Shoosmiths LLP** (Northamptonshire) held a dress down day and raised £85.86. **Sandra Davies** (Isle of Wight), with help from grandchildren **Kenidee** and **Fletcher**, raised £65 with a table top sale. **Bishop Henry & Edwards Vets** (Shropshire) raised £80 in lieu of sending Christmas cards. **Wendy Francis** (Devon) raised £185 with her lovely knitting at a local craft fair. **Cindy Parker-Sami**, **June Smith** and all the members of **Almondsbury Horse Show & Gymkhana Committee** (North Somerset) raised £100 at their show. **Joanne Atha** (Somerset) sold cards over the Christmas period and raised £60. **Philip Ashton** and the congregation of **Brockweir Moravian Church** (Monmouthshire) held a Soup Lunch. Everyone enjoyed a delicious meal and lovely get-together and they raised £172. **Iris Glover** (East Sussex) and the members of her patchwork and quilting group raised £85 with donations for refreshments at their meetings and fines for swearing – great idea! **Josie Squance** (Leicestershire) raised £50 at her coffee morning. **Jean Read** (West Yorkshire) raised £33 on her stall at the village society's super Christmas Fair. **Barbara** and **Mary Smith** (Kent) raised a stonking £744.31 with eBay trading and sale of their home-grown garden produce. **Amy Horner** (Merseyside) celebrated

her 80th birthday with a great party and raised £370. **Anne Elliott-Day** (Somerset) raised £56 on her stall at Wellington Christmas market. **Maggie Evans** (North Somerset), with help from **Ali Hemadani, Angela Chudnicki** and **Judith Mantell**, had a stall featuring a very popular tombola at a local fun dog show and raised £125. **Toni Bayliss** (Devon) organised a sponsored walk as part of her Duke of Edinburgh award and raised £160. **Rachel Burt** (Northamptonshire) raised £60 with the sale of her delicious dog biscuits –



**Ali Hemadani, Angela Chudnicki, Judith Mantell and Maggie Evans**

waggy tails all round! **Sandra Pridgen** (Lincolnshire) raised £100 with her yummy Christmas cake bake sale. **Judith Dranfield** (Cornwall), with help from **Laura** and **Annie**, raised £250.50 selling their lovely home-grown plants. The residents of **Green Tree Court** raised a brilliant £356 at their Christmas Fayre. The Friends of **Canon Appleton Court** (Kent) raised £100 with their sale table in their communal lounge. **Linda Eeley** (Essex) raised £140 with donations for poo-bags at her dog club, sale of jewellery and DVDs. **Christine Graham-Watson** and the members of the **Saucy Girls** (Devon) raised £200 with donations for refreshments at their monthly meetings. **Susan Dunnett** (Warwickshire) teaches bridge and raised an incredible £1,850 in lieu of charging tuition fees! Also in Warwickshire, **Sian Wade** held her very popular annual coffee morning and raised £370. **Euan Massie** (Aberdeenshire) works for **Bank of Scotland** who offer a donation to employees in recognition of their volunteering efforts. Thanks to Euan we received £64. **Joanne Coffey** and the team at **Waltham Centre for Pet Nutrition** (Leicestershire) chose us as their Charity of the Year for 2019 and raised a fantastic £2,112.12. **Rebecca Savory** and everyone at **Southern Counties Veterinary Specialists** (Hampshire) raised £176 for us while enjoying their Christmas celebrations. **Dragon Veterinary Centre** (Tyne & Wear) raised £75.45. **Thrapston Town Council** (Northamptonshire) raised £135.85 with donations for poo bags! **The Rotary Club of Maldon** (Essex) held a fireworks display. Our volunteer, **Martin Reed**, was involved in the overall running of the event and the Club wished to express their thanks with a donation to a charity of Martin's choosing. Martin chose us and we received a cracking (!) £500. Along with his



**The Saucy Girls and volunteer Val Cole**



wife, **Jenny**, he also looked after a friend's dog whilst they went on holiday and raised £200 in lieu of payment. The **Northwood** branch of **Waitrose** (Middlesex) included us in their Green Token campaign. Volunteer **Rosamund Bryer** attended a cheque presentation for the total collected of £370. **Animal Friends Pet Insurance's** Employee of the Quarter, **Cathrin Barnard** (Wiltshire), chose us to receive the reward for her hard work – a terrific £1,500! **Irene Zientek** (North Yorkshire) and her colleagues at the **Careers and Placements Team, University of York**, raised £70 in lieu of sending Christmas cards. **Edmund Shillabeer** (Devon) is celebrating 50 years in practice at **Harwell Vets**. He raised £317.18 with his anniversary party and collection tin – congratulations! **Barbara Watson** (North Somerset) raised £145 with a coffee morning and on her stall at **Clevedon Garden**. She was ably assisted by **Ginny** the Labrador! **Debra Thaine** and



Louise Matlock's crackers

everyone at **The Learning Centre** (Essex) raised £110 in lieu of sending Christmas cards. **Deborah White** and the residents of **Hanover Green** (Dorset) raised £132 with their lovely fortnightly coffee mornings. **Sylvia Halley** (Buckinghamshire) along with **Michele Chambers, Wynn Jones, Anne Manning, Ann Mattingley, Linda Mehlo, Jan Payne** and **Doreen Penn** raised £80 from sales at their craft group. **Louise Matlock** (London) raised £450 with the sale of her beautiful handmade Christmas crackers. **Barbara Attwood** and the members of **2nd Helston Guides and Helston Rangers** (Cornwall) earned their Cornwall Guides Christmas badge by eating Smarties and filling the tube with money! They chose us to receive the proceeds – a very tasty £138.53! Brilliant as always, **Maggie Martin** (West Sussex) raised

£245 from the sale of cards and gifts. **Joanna Hayward** (Suffolk) raised £70 in lieu of gifts on her 50th birthday. **Purple Vet** (West Yorkshire) raised £60 with their Easter raffle. **Lindsey Jelfs** (Norfolk) raised £117 from the sale of her cuddly handmade SnuffleBuddy toys. **Pam** and **John Davenport** (Staffordshire) enjoyed a lovely (and socially distanced!) street party with neighbours, along with a buffet and raffle, and raised £100. **Judith Chesworth** (Essex) and the members of the **Inner Wheel Club of Saffron Walden** chose us as their charity of the year in 2019 and raised £150. **Kate Hamilton** (Gloucestershire) raised £115 with postal astrology readings – wow! **Cheryl Alston** (Hampshire) raised £437 in lieu of gifts on her 60th birthday – many more of them, Cheryl! **Huguette Savoie** (East Yorkshire) raised £125 with her cake club. Another birthday! **Helen Ball** (West Sussex) raised a terrific £556 for us. **Valerie Ehret** (Devon) raised £240 with the sale of home-grown plants. **Denise Gill** (Cheshire) raised £41 at a car boot sale.

**Myra Cox** (Somerset) had a sale table on her front lawn and raised £30. **Manston K9 Society** (Kent) raised a brilliant £320 at their Christmas Dog Show. **Swan School of Dog Training** (Buckinghamshire) raised £85 with their Christmas raffle. The **Andover and District Dog Training Society's** Open Obedience Show was sadly cancelled in 2019. A number of entrants decided not to reclaim their entry fee and send to us instead; we received £128. **Fleet & District Dog Training Society** chose us as their Charity of the Year in 2019 and raised £182.60 with their raffle, bring & buys, quiz night, loan of equipment and their collection tin. **The Wonky Dog Club** (Shropshire) raised £78 with their Club walk. **Cheltenham & District Dog Training Club** raised a fantastic £500. **Central Essex Dog Training Society** chose us as one of their charities of the year and raised £140. **CHeWs Dog Training** (London) chose us as their Charity of the Year once again and raised a stupendous £4,012 with their quiz nights, raffles and annual dog show! **The Norwegian Elkhound Club of Great Britain** (Lancashire) raised £100. **South Bucks Agility Club** sent us £150. **Welsh Terrier and Friends** (Cheshire) raised £200 with the sale of their fantastic Welshie calendars. **Barking Mad Dog Training & Behaviour Centre** (Norfolk) raised £43 with their collection tin and Christmas lights' switch on. **Clacton & District Dog Training Club** sent us £200. **The South East and East Anglian Tibetan Spaniel Society** raised an incredible £670 with their online dog show.

Well done all and thank you so much. I hope we will be more 'normal' next year.



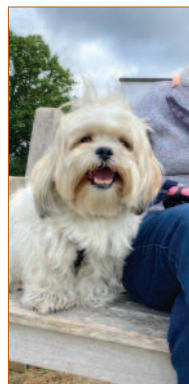
## Volunteer Views

Our first view is from **Victoria Flint** in Surrey.

"All my life, I have wanted a dog, but was never allowed to by my parents as we always had cats! My friend mentioned to me about The Cinnamon Trust and it sounded perfect, so I signed up.

After getting a call from The Cinnamon Trust, I was excited to meet Ivy and her 2-year-old Shih Tzu, Frankie. On the phone, Ivy said that Frankie may be a bit wary as I was a new person, but she was sure he would soon warm to me.

So, the day I went to meet Ivy and Frankie, I knocked on the door and when Ivy opened it, I was greeted by a bouncing Shih Tzu who didn't seem very wary of me at all! I took Frankie off for a walk round the village we live in. Once we reached the recreation ground, Frankie had his 'crazy 5 minutes' where he bolted around in circles, grinning like a Cheshire Cat. We then walked further and came across a field of cows.... Frankie



was not too sure of these and had to show them who was boss by barking away at them (the cows did not care and just wanted to come over to say hello!).

Frankie currently has long hair and Ivy obviously takes great care in brushing him and keeping him clean. On our walks, Frankie likes to find piles of dry mud and roll in it! The first time he did it, I said “FRANK! YOUR MUM WON’T LET YOU OUT WITH ME IF YOU COME HOME IN A MESS!” and frantically tried pulling out the twigs out of his fur. He literally just looked at me, smiled, and walked off wagging his tail! I had to apologise to Ivy that Frankie came home with mud and twigs all through his coat, but she giggled and told me not to worry, which was a relief!

Ivy is a joy. When I first met her, she kept asking “are you sure you’re ok to walk Frankie? I don’t want this to cause you any trouble. Will you definitely come back and walk him again?” I think she found it quite amazing that her volunteers were happy to help her and Frankie but honestly, walking Frankie and having a chat with Ivy is a pleasure. Every day, I look forward to going to pick him up and seeing his grin. It is lovely to be able to help Ivy and get Frankie out for a walk. She is so grateful, and it makes it all really worthwhile. I am glad Ivy doesn’t mind if he comes back home a bit muddy!

I haven’t been walking Frankie for very long, but I can’t wait for more adventures! Becoming a volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust has allowed me to help someone who needs it, and it really is the best feeling. Seeing the smiles on Ivy’s and Frankie’s faces makes it so worthwhile. Frankie and I have explored places I would never have been if I hadn’t been walking him, so I have been able to see places in my local area that I didn’t even know existed.”



And **Pauline McDonald** in Cleveland writes:



“I walk Bobby, a 10 year old rescue cross breed dog, twice weekly for his owner Michael. Bobby is a cute little character with a quirky personality. He loves people and will gladly stop for attention when out on walks. He’s not too keen on other dogs so he tends to just ignore them or give them a good stare then walk past. He generally tells you where he wants to walk and for how long. He doesn’t require long walks but he

does enjoy going out, especially to the local park where he suddenly thinks he’s a puppy again and has a good run. He has some funny little traits including stopping outside any pub we pass, hopeful for a visit I assume. He also stops at the bookmaker’s door – he’s never told me if he has a hot tip or not but he also seems



keen to try and go inside! He loves a treat and will happily pose like a meerkat in anticipation of a reward, he's such a funny little dog.

I have recently increased the number of walks with Bobby per week so that Michael can continue to isolate. Bobby eagerly waits for me in the garden and runs up to me ready and willing for his walk. I take my own lead, poo bags and antibac gel and off we go!

It is so rewarding walking Bobby on behalf of his owner and The Cinnamon Trust. I work full time in a stressful job, and some of my interests are dogs and walking, so this is the perfect voluntary opportunity for me to unwind and get some fresh air whilst enjoying the company of Bobby. I have also forged a lovely friendship with Bobby's owner. We enjoy a good chat and catch up when we see each other, which I know also benefits Michael as he is alone and has no family apart from Bobby.

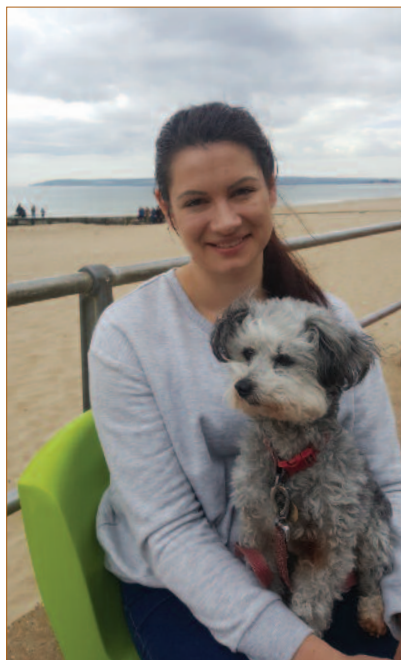
I would urge anyone interested in volunteering to consider The Cinnamon Trust – it's so rewarding, worthwhile and enjoyable. You will find so many benefits from doing so and also enhance the lives of those you help."



**Amber D'Angeles** in Dorset says:

"I found out about The Cinnamon Trust in 2015 and registered immediately. However, because I didn't drive, I was very limited to the area I could volunteer in. I eventually got an email asking me if I would be able to help out with Gracie – I checked Google maps and was delighted to find she only lived round the corner from me, so that weekend I went to meet her and she's been walking me ever since!

My first thought when I met her was "phew, I am glad she's little!". I love all dogs, but I am not very strong and was afraid if I volunteered to walk a bigger dog I wouldn't be able to manage if they decided to make a break for it. My second thought was 'she's so cute!' This is a fact, I have it confirmed on almost every walk we go on. People all say how cute she is, and ask about her. We like to use this opportunity to do a bit of advocacy for The Cinnamon Trust



so I clap my hands and Gracie jumps up into my arms (yes, we are showing off, but we want people to realise how marvellous The Trust is). Then, I tell them that I'm not Gracie's human but she allows me to walk her through The Cinnamon Trust and then I tell them about The Trust and point them in the direction of the website. Gracie is a superb ambassador and by the end of the chat she hops back to the ground and off we go back on our walk.

Well, I say walk – it's more like a military forced march. I don't know exactly what breed Gracie is, but I think there's a bit of racehorse in there somewhere, and while she is small she is utterly relentless when it comes to walkies. She shows me no mercy even when I try and reason with her and explain that, unlike her, I don't have four wheel drive, so could we please go up the hill just a bit slower? No, absolutely not (she conveys this by a flick of her eyebrow) and ploughs ahead, towing me along behind her.

However, on the rare occasion when Gracie wants a bit of a rest, I have no choice but to comply. Again, she deploys the eyebrow and does a small hop against my leg to indicate she would prefer to be airlifted for a short while. So, up she jumps into my arms and sits bolt upright like the Queen of Sheba, proudly surveying the path ahead. Then, when I am least expecting it, she tries to catch me with a sneaky snog - yuk! I love Gracie so much!

Gracie is a wonderful companion and a superb motivator. Some days, when I have had a bit of a tiring time at work or am not feeling 100% and would normally just flake out on the sofa, I know that there's a little lady just waiting for me. So I pull on my hiking boots and off I go. When I arrive I really don't know who is the more pleased about the impending walk, her or me – I think it's about equal - and no matter how long or short (neither of us like the rain, Gracie especially as she is quite an absorbent breed) we always have a lovely time.

I am so fortunate to have been paired up with her, she's not just a volunteering commitment – she's my friend. I am also really lucky that she has such a great human, too. Carole and I have the most enjoyable chats (after the walk, Gracie doesn't permit me to hang about beforehand) and we share movie and book recommendations. During lock down, she's been the only human I have actually been in contact with aside from my Tesco delivery drivers.

During the time I have been walking with Gracie I have had some very big events in my life, some good, some sad, and Gracie and Carole are always there to cheer me on or cheer me up. I have celebrated new jobs, passing my driving test, and the excitement of buying a new home with them.

I have also had sad times where I have had to say goodbye to some of my own animals, either through illness or old age, and when my excellent grandpa died.

Walking with Gracie is a tonic and no matter how sad I am, I know that a walk with her will always help my heart.

So, when Carole thanks me for walkies at the end of each week I always say “no, thank you” because I really believe it’s Gracie that’s doing me such a great service...

...I still won’t let her smooch me though. Bleh!”

And **Carol Perkins**, Gracie’s mum writes:

“I’d heard about The Cinnamon Trust from local dog walkers some years ago, never thinking I’d need their help.

However, in April 2017 an incident involving painting a high ceiling and a ladder left me with a badly damaged shoulder (silly me - never again!). One of my first thoughts was to arrange dog walking for my small, but very active dog, Gracie.

By early May I had two regular walkers from The Cinnamon Trust and Gracie was incredibly happy to have so many walks. As my shoulder improved, a long slow process involving surgery, I was able to manage some of the walks myself. So, it was left with Amber to continue the longer walks, giving me some very welcome breaks.

During lockdown I have had to stay at home and Amber has walked Gracie almost every day and I know they both look forward to their walks together very much.

Gracie really loves Amber, she squeaks with pleasure when she's at the door and jumps into her arms. And Amber really loves Gracie. They have a wonderful bond.

I'm so happy to have found The Cinnamon Trust. It's an amazing organisation with so many different ways to help beloved pets and their owners. And I'm so pleased that Amber has come into our lives; Gracie is too. Thank you all so much."



From East Sussex, **Nicki Verrall** sends this:

“I applied to join The Cinnamon Trust in March 2020 as I recently went from working full-time to part-time and had some spare time on my hands. I decided that I would like to help out with walking or fostering a dog for someone who was unable to do it for themselves. I also thought this would benefit me, not only by the joy it would bring knowing I was helping someone else, but also by giving me some welcome exercise at the same time.



As a dog lover, my husband and I have always had dogs and lost our last one at the age of 15½, about 6 years ago. Although we both missed having a dog around the house, and would dearly have loved another one, we decided at this time it was not practical due to work commitments.

I had only been registered with The Trust for a short while when I was contacted to see if I would be willing to help out during the Covid-19 pandemic. I was delighted to be able to assist during this time and had no hesitation when they asked me to help Anita and her dog Billy, so we arranged our first socially distanced meeting.



Billy is a sweet 6-year-old Shih Tzu, who I now walk three times a week for Anita. When I first met Billy he had a fairly long curly coat because he had not been able to get to the groomer but, now he has been, he is a very smart boy!

I collect Billy from the garden on each visit and he is always so excited to see me. I phone Anita to let her know that I have arrived and to check that she is okay. She then lets Billy out of the back door and he comes bounding up the garden path, full of beans and wagging his tail. After we have said our hellos he sits and waits for me to put his lead on (I use my own lead). He then gives out a couple of barks and off we go!

I normally walk him around our local park and then back home, which usually takes around an hour. He loves this walk and walks very well by my side. We always see so many different things, especially squirrels, which I think he would chase given half the chance. I talk to him as we walk and I'm sure that he understands some of my mumblings! Billy has now got used to the route that we take each time we go out together, and he likes to cross the road in certain places - he's so funny that if I change his routine he soon corrects me.

Billy is very popular. He also has a different walker on a Wednesday and another on a Saturday. It is always a pleasure to walk Billy as he is very well behaved and makes you feel so happy.

Anita and I have not yet met face-to-face so to speak because she has to be very careful because of her health. However, we do speak regularly on the phone, which I know means a lot to her. We always say that we cannot wait for the day

when we can have a lovely cup of tea together.

I would highly recommend volunteering for The Cinnamon Trust to anyone who has some extra time on their hands and who would like to do something worthwhile to help someone else and their animals out. I have found it to be a very satisfying pastime and I am so glad that I volunteered. It is amazing how, during uncertain times, a pet can bring everyone together."



**Alienor Lawrence** and her son **Jake** in Berkshire write:

"We always thought we were a cat family... until our son was born. He is definitely also a dog person and, every time he went to a friend's, would spend all day throwing the ball for their pooch. So much so that when I picked him up the parents would say "you have to get him a dog!"

Doing our research, a good friend recommended The Cinnamon Trust as a good way to get some experience with dogs before taking the plunge to get our own. We signed up, and soon after were asked whether we could walk Milo for Maureen twice a week. Maureen has a bad back and can't take Milo out for walks at the moment. She is always very welcoming and we enjoy a good chat either side of our outings. Milo, a lovely 5-year-old Labrador, seems to enjoy our visits and very politely stops by the handy bin for us!



**Jake with Milo and little sister**

On our first visit, Maureen was great at teaching us all the commands for Milo. We spent an hour in the garden throwing the ball and practising commands so that we would be comfortable with him out and about.

I've no doubt we will have to give in sooner or later and get a puppy of our own but, for now, this is just the perfect way for us to get a little more used to the idea of having a dog and it's a nice way to help someone out while we can."



This will make you smile from **Jane Clarke** in Birmingham:

"It was my vet's idea for me to become a Cinnamon Trust Volunteer. She thought dog walking would be a good way to help me get over the recent loss of my 15 and a half year old Westie. I wasn't convinced, but thought I would give it a go and I might even enjoy it. So, I completed the volunteers' form and waited to see what would happen.

Emails went backwards and forwards - asking for phone numbers and email addresses for my referees; then for a photograph for my ID card – and I was accepted.

When my ID badge was emailed through, I proudly showed my family and friends. However, I didn't think I would be given an assignment as we were in the middle of a global pandemic and everything was slowly grinding to a halt.

When my daughter asked me what sort of a dog I would like to walk if I got the chance, I can remember saying to her "I really don't care as long as it's a small dog and not a Dalmatian." This was because the only time I have been bitten by a dog was when I was 12. I was standing on my neighbour's door step when a Dalmatian ran past me and sunk his teeth into my bottom. It left a lasting impression on me and resulted in a trip to casualty for a Tetanus jab!

I checked my emails religiously for the first few days in case The Cinnamon Trust contacted me, but nothing appeared in my inbox. The only day I didn't bother to check until early evening there was a message from Isabel:

"I am emailing today as there is an elderly lady in your area who would really like some dog walking help. She has some help from us already, but a volunteer has

had to stop temporarily due to the virus. So, we need someone to step in. Is this something you may be interested in? The dog is a charming chap called Charlie Brown and he is a 12 year old Dalmatian."

My first reaction was Sod's Law, Peanuts and Charles Schultz.

Isabel sent me all the details so I phoned Margaret, Charlie Brown's owner, and arranged to meet up on the following Monday. Finally, Monday arrived, and I was pleasantly surprised. Charlie Brown seemed very friendly, even to a complete stranger like me, which is very reassuring because he is one of the biggest spotty dogs I have ever seen and very powerful for a 12-year-old.

Margaret asked me if I could walk





Charlie every other day to help him lose weight, because he has a heart condition and is on a diet. I take him for short walks up and down his road and also down a couple of side roads. He is slow, steady, knows where he wants to go and is a pleasure to take out. He is a bit of a diva though. He won't go out in the rain or if there are any small dogs around when we leave his garden. And there is no way he will go out for a walk on shopping delivery day when his food and chicken snacks are delivered!

I have been to see him a few times now and he always greets me like a long lost friend and has the waggiest tail I have ever seen. Charlie Brown and I will be fine, as long as I remember who the boss in our partnership is – Charlie, of course!"



**Kim Stachwell** in Staffordshire writes:

"I first heard of The Cinnamon Trust just before lockdown. I recognised there was going to be a significant increase in demand for the help they offer, so thought now was a great time to sign up! I was soon notified of a lady nearby who had been stuck indoors for some time as she was shielding and very high risk.

Sandra has a couple of dog walkers from The Cinnamon Trust but her weekend walker had had to drop out because she was pregnant and also had to stay safe. Saturday came and I was invited into Sandra's garden to meet her loveable chap, Archie, and take him for a walk.

He's a 12-year-old rescue who's had a couple of nasty experiences with other dogs which have left him aggressive to any and all other canines. Luckily for me he's great with people, superb on the lead and loves walkies! After a good long walk I returned him from his adventure and he was happy as ever. He has also lost 2kg since we have been walking and only another 3 to go to be the perfect weight for him.

Truth be told, there was probably an extra 30 mins spent chatting to Sandra who has such limited contact with the outside world at the moment. It was nice to hear her stories whilst admiring her beautiful garden. Until next week!"



From Devon, **Lee Shambis** and **Jode Bliss-Thompson** say:



"We walk Aci in Paignton, she's 14 years old but you'd never know. Especially once you get her ball out - don't try and stop throwing it for her, though!"

We first started walking Aci just over a year ago and she brings so much joy to our lives, gives us motivation and something to look forward to each week. She's always super happy to see us and never happier than at the beach. Sometimes she's brave and goes for paddle, or sometimes she just barks at the sea! Either way, as soon as she sees the sea she wants to go there. We have this thing we say "she doesn't know where she's going but she can't wait to get there!"



Aci also loves a good roll, and we can always tell when this is going to happen because she starts running while sniffing the ground and one of her shoulders drops. She is very playful and also has this extremely mischievous look in her eyes! We've really loved discovering hidden gems and new places with Aci in our home county, and are so grateful to The Cinnamon Trust for bringing us together. We would highly recommend volunteering and meeting your own special friend!"



**Alison Baker** in Berkshire sends this:

"Ollie is one of the dogs I walk through The Cinnamon Trust. I've been walking him twice a week for just over a year now and my husband often comes along with me. Ollie's a funny little pooch! When I first started walking him, every time I arrived to take him out he'd run behind the armchair. Then followed about 5 minutes of me trying to coax him out; calling him, trying to reach him or going behind the armchair from one side and him running out the other! But as time went on, he got used to me (and the treats I took to tempt him) and now I'm greeted with lots of barks and a jump straight into the armchair ready for me to put his lead on.

Our walks are fun. Ollie's a lovely dog and for someone who's never had a dog or doesn't have much dog experience, I find him very easy to walk. He's pretty chilled out but he does make me laugh as he has a 'mad 2 minutes' sometimes - he turns into the dog equivalent of the kid who's had too many blue Smarties! He doesn't really get phased by other dogs and is quite content in his own little world, which is a very happy one.



It's easy to see the love and joy Ollie brings to Audrey. They absolutely adore each other and it's so nice knowing that I'm able to help someone out with the work which comes with having a dog. I work full time and also run two of my own businesses on top of various other commitments (including walking another Cinnamon Trust dog!) so I don't really have much free time at home for a pet of my own. But, this way, I can still have fluffy cuddles without the commitment. Audrey and I have got to know each other a lot more over the past year and we both look forward to seeing each other every visit.

If you or someone you know has a small amount of free time each week (even just an hour) and is looking for a rewarding volunteering opportunity, please do consider signing up to The Cinnamon Trust. You won't regret it!"



**Katrina Lines** in West Sussex writes:

"I have volunteered as a dog walker for the Cinnamon Trust on and off since 2013. It has been the perfect way for me to enjoy the company of dogs and explore the outdoors whilst having the flexibility to move around the country for work. I spent two years living in Australia and wasn't able to find a similar scheme to fill the void, so I knew when I moved back to the UK I wanted to continue volunteering with The Cinnamon Trust.

Lark is the fourth dog I've had the pleasure of walking for The Cinnamon Trust and she is a four year old Italian Spinone (but acts more like a four month old!). I was asked to help after her owner Carol spent time in hospital and was no longer able to walk Lark herself. We live on the coast so lots of our walks are along beaches, and Lark loves nothing more than to play fetch. She's pretty good at catching the ball, but does have a habit of putting the ball in the sea and watching it float away. I think she likes to see me get wet!





Lark has a beautiful temperament – she is a very happy dog, always up for a walk but also quite happy to snooze the afternoon away in front of the TV. She isn't fazed by other dogs and loves the attention of anyone willing to give it to her. Carol has recently bought a harness for Lark with an attachment so that Lark can walk alongside Carol's mobility scooter. Lark has taken to this really well – and it gives Carol the independence to take Lark out herself.

As well as meeting Lark, it has been a pleasure getting to know Carol over the past 9 months. We didn't know anybody in the area when we moved to the coast, so it has been lovely to have Carol and Lark nearby to meet with regularly and natter over a cup of tea. We have recently taken

the plunge and bought a puppy of our own, and Carol has given us lots of helpful tips in raising a puppy. They have also been a great help in socialising – Lark is extremely patient with our over-excited 8 week old! I'm looking forward to taking the two of them on walks together, I just need to ensure Lark doesn't teach her to leave the ball in the sea!

I'm extremely fortunate to be able to say that volunteering with The Cinnamon Trust has been a two-way street and I have gained so much from the experience."



And from Nottinghamshire, **Sarah Habermass** sends this:



"I started walking Gizzy and Lily once a week at the beginning of February. I joined The Cinnamon Trust as a volunteer in 2017 but, as there have been so few dogs to walk in Nottinghamshire, they were my first proper walkies!

We seemed to immediately hit it off on my introduction visit. Straight away Gizzy was so friendly and wanted lots of strokes and cuddles. Lily was a little more cautious but was soon nestling up to me on the sofa.

They have such cute little personalities and

seem to understand every word Mrs Smith says to them! Due to ongoing health issues, she is only able to take them for a short walk round the corner at the moment. So, I make sure (weather permitting - they don't like going out in the rain!) I take them for a longer walk at a nearby park and playing fields. They both absolutely love sniffing, exploring and running through the grass and it's lovely to watch, too. They love it when another dog comes along and always pull to go and say hello, their tails wagging excitedly!

Of course, not long after I started walking Gizzy and Lily the coronavirus pandemic started to grip the nation, followed by the lockdown in March. Thanks to regular communications from The Cinnamon Trust, I felt very informed about where we as volunteers stood during the crisis and how to stay safe. I was really pleased that we were classed as key workers so I could carry on helping Mrs Smith, giving Lily and Gizzy a good longer walk. And, to be honest, I have been glad of the opportunity to have some normality during these very strange times."



**Natasha Bennett** in Devon has this to say:

"After losing our family Cocker Spaniel at the age of 14½ in 2016, I felt lost and weird not having to walk a dog three times a day. My family and I weren't ready to get another dog immediately and I was recommended by a family friend to volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust as there was huge demand to help walk dogs belonging to elderly people in the local area.

I strongly felt the need for a 'daily dosage of dog' and some company, so I applied in Oct 2017. I was put forward to walk a 7-year-old Rough Collie just 5 minutes away from me. Grace was extremely shy when she first saw me, but curious. It took a lot of time for her to trust me to take her on short walks. It then became clear to me that Grace was also very stubborn on where she wanted to go and she would plonk her bum down if she didn't want to go further - she still does this today. Whilst on our walks, Grace has made new human friends, as well as making friends with their pets, and looks forward to scrounging for treats when she sees them. She is now recognisable in the village due to her very hairy, fluffy look!



**Grace**

Then, in January 2018, I was asked by The Cinnamon Trust to walk Henry (a 5-year-old Shih Tzu) for an elderly and very pleasant couple once a week. He's very



**Henry**

grumpy and growly at times, but can be sweet when he wants a treat or a back scratch. He waits on the staircase and barks once he sees me through the window. He loves his long walks in the countryside and one thing he really does enjoy is barking randomly at runners as they pass us - hopefully with barks of encouragement, but I am not so sure!

Being a volunteer for two and half years now has helped me destress from other external factors in my life and has been

rewarding knowing that I have made a difference to the local community. I love the outdoors and it gives me an excuse to get some fresh air, and experience nature, to aid my mental wellbeing even further. I have recommended volunteering with The Cinnamon Trust to several people who love dogs, but don't necessarily want to own one. It's a great way to help out, especially during these recent times."



**Jennifer Cawdron** in Aberdeenshire writes:

"My brother has been volunteering with The Cinnamon Trust, walking dogs for quite a long time, and has frequently suggested that I should take a dog with me on the walks that I enjoy. I do not have a dog (I can't afford one) but I have been brought up with dogs and do enjoy working with them. It seemed to make sense that if I was going on a walk, a dog that was not getting exercise might enjoy coming with me. However, I never got round to filling out the forms until lockdown came!



I wanted to do something to help. All my ordinary volunteering activities were off limits, I couldn't even give blood because of my asthma! My brother reminded me about The Cinnamon Trust so I filled in the forms, checked with my referees and emailed the forms to The Trust. A couple of weeks later my friends told me that my references had been followed up. And, before long, I had an email asking if I would take Teddy for walks.

The first couple of walks we just did from

Teddy's house around a local park. The second one was a particularly warm day and Teddy went for a paddle in the small pond in the park! I wasn't sure how this would be received when we got home, however the fact he had had a lovely time meant Rachel was delighted, even though he was a bit muddy and wet! She was very grateful and appreciated me walking very much.

The second week we ventured a bit further. We set off on the path through woodland (one of my favourite walks) and then we came to a small narrow path through the trees. Teddy was insistent that we should go this way. I did not mind although I knew it would be a much longer walk. Anyway, I said "you show me the way" and he bounded ahead, tail wagging furiously, ears pricked up and a real spring in his step, obviously full of joy. The walk was a long walk, but even though he's just a little dog with short legs he seemed to thoroughly enjoy himself and I enjoyed seeing him so happy.

It has been lovely to help someone who cannot get out, and a delight to be greeted by a very excited little Terrier who knows we are off on another adventure.

Being a volunteer for The Cinnamon Trust is proving to be a delight."



From West Sussex, **Alison Westbrook** says:

"After moving to Buckingham 18 months ago The Cinnamon Trust found me Merlin: a happy little chap who, at 15, is as bright as a button and such a friendly and positive boy. Merlin came to his lovely current owners from a rescue center when he was 8 months old. Unfortunately a few years later he had a bad fall where he broke a front leg and sadly, after a couple of operations, it had to be removed.

He manages so well but gets tired understandably, so we have a sit down when we are out and he sits happily people (and dog!) watching and sniffing the air. I must admit at first I worried about him when we were out, but Joy his owner said that I would get used to his situation and she was right. I just let him dictate the pace and ensure we do not walk too far as, of course, we have to walk back again. People always stop and ask me about him and are amazed at how well he does. As dogs carry most of their weight on their front legs this is difficult for him, but he certainly does not let it bother him.





It was amazing from the first time I took him out how well behaved he was. He is so obedient and never bothers about anything or anyone while we are out, happy to just walk along and sniff but also sociable if any human or dogs fancy saying hello. He goes crazy for a tennis ball, and loves to play, so I have to make sure he doesn't go pinching someone else's ball!

We are lucky enough to have some lovely places to walk in the town with a large park, some woodland areas and a river. I work full time so do not have the time for my own dog. Being an office worker, it is so nice to get out with Merlin and get some fresh air myself in such a beautiful location right on my doorstep. Long may it continue!"



**Barbara Plummer** in Northamptonshire is one of 1,323 volunteers who joined us as Emergency Volunteers. We have tasked all but 21 but even these are putting up posters!

"I answered the urgent appeal made by The Cinnamon Trust for Emergency Volunteers during Covid-19. My reason for wanting to become a volunteer was so that I could make a contribution to the effort that communities all over the country were making to help others during this crisis. Volunteering for The Cinnamon Trust was something I felt I could do between home schooling, walking my own dogs and it also fitted around my other commitments. My friend Carla has been a volunteer for over 4 years and it was she that gave me a reference and let me know how rewarding volunteering for The Trust is.



I currently walk a beautiful 12-year-old Golden Retriever called Willow 3 times a week for a lovely elderly lady who, due to her advanced age and poor health, needs to stay safe during these uncertain times.

Willow is a lovely old girl with the sweetest of temperaments who enjoys strolling through the woods on the lookout for squirrels. Typical of the breed, she is affectionate, friendly and loves her treats, especially liver cake and gravy bones!

I feel very fortunate that I am able to make a contribution at this time and I know that Willow's owner appreciates the additional

support. Willow certainly enjoys getting out in the fresh air, even if her owner isn't able to at the moment, and it is lovely to see this beautiful dog thriving during these very difficult times."



**Helen Thirkettle** in Norfolk has put pen to paper....

"I've been volunteering for the Cinnamon Trust since 2012 and have enjoyed meeting many dogs in that time - big, small, bouncy and timid - but each one a pleasure in their own right. I heard about The Trust via an advert in our local paper and eagerly joined up as a dog walker. The Cinnamon Trust allows me to have my doggy-fix and also feel like I am helping someone meet the needs of their beloved companion too - so it really is a win-win situation.



**Chloe with Helen**

When asked to walk 3 boisterous dogs (Issy, Misty and Mandy - who have since been long-term fostered via The Cinnamon Trust) my boyfriend joined too, so we could walk them together, which was great fun - especially the games of catch between the 5 of us!

During the pandemic I've been working from home, and this allowed me to offer daily walks for one of our latest clients - Chloe, the 11 year old Westie. Chloe and I bonded from the first walk; there is just something special about her. If I tell you that Anne (her owner) has nicknamed her 'Chloe-Waggy Tail' then that may explain why. She is a dog more contented with her lot in life than I've ever known - that tail is going to wag itself off one of these days!

Anne had to visit hospital a couple of times this summer, once quite unexpectedly. The Cinnamon Trust arranged for Chloe to come and stay with us, to relieve Anne of the worry of what to do with Chloe whilst away. We've never been able to foster before - but working from home meant John and I were really pleased to be able to lend a hand and open our home to the pitter patter of tiny paws.

Chloe soon made her presence felt; every morning we would awake to a bouncing cloud on legs! It proved impossible to wake up grumpy when there was a bundle



Chloe with John

of happiness greeting you at the bottom of the stairs waiting for the exciting things the new day promised (a walk, breakfast and a post-meal nap in Chloe's case, a walk, breakfast and work for John and I!). Chloe would often help with our jobs - and once joined in a Zoom Call with my department (uninvited!). Evenings were particularly peaceful, with John, Chloe and I curled up on the sofa watching a bit of telly. The only problem was Chloe would stretch out as far as possible, so John

and I were confined to the sofa edges. If we got too close those legs would very subtly push us back into place (for a small dog she managed to take up at least half the sofa!).

Chloe is a small dog, but she tells you exactly what she wants with a paw placed firmly on your leg or arm. This means either "I need to go out", "feed me" or "stroke me" depending on the time of day. Meal times were not leisurely affairs - we timed her once - she took 20 seconds to eat her dinner and we reckon that might be a record!

Having Chloe to stay lifted our spirits during a strange time, got us out and about and helped us explore our local area, too. It was like having a friend to stay only (unlike human visitors!) she never overstayed her welcome! We still miss the click of her paws on the floor as she comes to find out what we're doing and whether it is something she might like to lend a paw to.

For those who think they might be able to help with short-term fostering, I'd really encourage you to give it a go through The Cinnamon Trust. You'll make a new four-legged friend, be helping someone in need and you will have as much support and help from The Trust as you need. During the foster periods, The Trust kept in touch, provided updates on how Anne was doing and made it very clear that they were there to help if needed. They knew so much about Chloe, even down to what brand of dog food Chloe ate - those people at Head Office sure know their stuff! Please do consider helping out if you can; you will be rewarded in more ways than you can imagine."



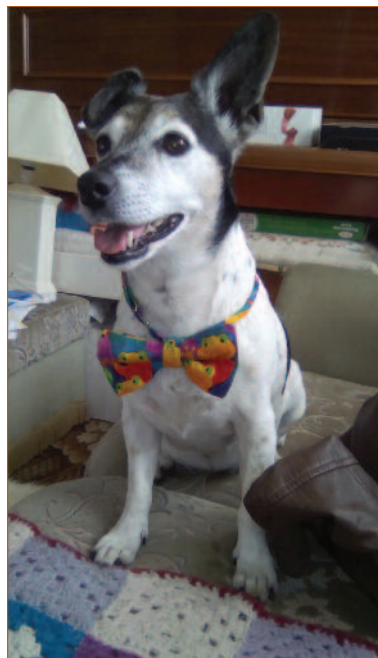
And **Judith Whitmore** (Shropshire) says:

"The Cinnamon Trust contacted me to ask if I would look after Meg, a Jack

Russell, while her lifetime foster carers went on holiday. Jill and Glyn brought Meg over to meet us beforehand and it was love at first sight.

Meg was with us for just over 2 weeks and I was very excited on the day that she was due to arrive. She settled in immediately and spent many happy hours exploring the garden, which she loved. I have a rabbit, Billy, and when he was in his garden run Meg would rush up to him to touch noses which made us laugh. She was very keen on her food and didn't hesitate to let me know when it was dinner time. In the evenings she would settle down on the sofa next to me and the very second that I moved away she would nip into my seat - maybe it was nice and warm!

Jill and Glyn told us that Meg sleeps in the kitchen at home (her choice) but I was worried that she would be cold in ours overnight. So, every evening after her last visit to the garden my husband, Martin, brought her basket up into our bedroom and she stayed in there happily and quietly until it was time to get up.



We live in Cannock Chase, which is a designated Area of Natural Beauty and Scientific Interest and Meg was very excited by all the lovely long walks that she took us on. We have lots of deer and other wildlife in the area and, although Meg didn't encounter a deer she was certainly aware of their scent. Just before the end of Meg's stay Covid-19 caused the closure of all the car parks on the Chase, because of all the people from other areas who were descending on us. However, we're very lucky to have a couple of nature reserves within walking distance so Meg was able to explore those, too.

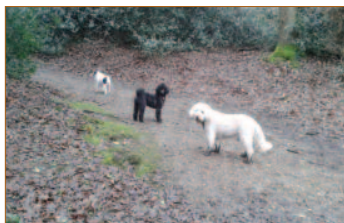
I was sad when Meg went home and we would happily have kept her forever. She was a wonderful little dog and it was a joy to have her with us. We would be more than happy to look after Meg again and I'm very grateful to The Cinnamon Trust for contacting me about her."



From Hampshire, **Patricia Hughes** will have you chuckling!

"When my and my partner John's beloved surrogate baby Ruspur (rough-coated Jack Russell) died in 2015, the vets suggested The Cinnamon Trust. We couldn't





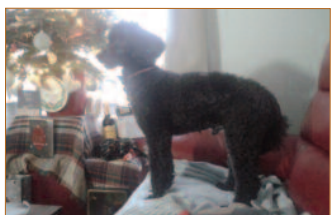
**Lucy, Marley and Buddy on a walk**

even begin think about another dog as a replacement, but it would be a way for me to still walk a dog, maintain some of the usual routine (and have some doggie company) while I started to come to terms with the loss of Ruspur. It would also benefit a dog in need of walkies and help the owners, too! For what I fully admit were initially entirely selfish reasons, Max, a Dachshund, became my first Cinnamon friend and I enjoyed walking him

once a week on the Common where I used to walk with Ruspur.

Five years down the line, there continue to be walkies 3 times per week, with Buddy the Cockapoo and, until recently, Lucy a Patterdale/Jack Russell cross. Lucy looked so much like Ruspur - I couldn't say no to taking her out for walkies! She has now moved away from the area and I miss her very much. Buddy is happy to take it as it comes, and although he's generally over-excited and a bit too bouncy sometimes for the others when we first pick him up, he soon settles down and is a perfect companion. I love it when they are walking alongside each other, leads short but slack, side-by-side, stopping at important sniffs. They are as good as gold.

In addition to walking dogs we have also fostered, both temporarily and permanently. Jess the Cavalier came to us as a cuddly Christmas present in December 2015 and any initial doubts about taking on a rather overweight middle-aged doggie (when we were used to a game terrier) were soon quashed by her loving nature, happy disposition and gorgeous looks. Poppy the teeny-weeny Yorkie stayed with us for a couple of weeks during summer 2016 whilst her Mum had an operation, and Patch the beautiful Cavalier/Pomeranian mix was a perfect house guest for just over a week last summer whilst his Mum was in hospital unexpectedly. Another Cinnamon Trust volunteer walker - Elaine (and now friend as a result) brought 'Luscious Lola' (as Elaine called her) to us in March 2017 as a permanent foster. This feisty Jack Russell/Chihuahua/Pomeranian mixture was with us until May last year when kidney disease took her from us way too soon. Tiggy, the Staffie Cross, stayed with us in November until he moved on to a new home in posh Sandbanks.



**Marley**

And so to Marley.... Marley the Miniature Poodle is a temporary foster whilst his Mum has some planned operations. We picked him up on New Year's Day 2020 from his Auntie Sheila and Uncle Mike who had been looking after him since November. Unfortunately, Sheila herself was going to have to go in to hospital, so Marley needed a second temporary home.

It was wonderful to get out and about during the remaining Christmas holidays with him as I had missed doing this with Lola so much. Whereas Lola's favourite thing was her tennis ball and chasing it, Marley's favourite thing seems to be meeting other dogs. As soon as he spots one in the distance, he starts squeaking (I think his Uncle Mike called it 'crowing') excitedly - a walk is just not complete without meeting another doggy friend!

I thought at first that Marley, as a Poodle, might be a 'posh Prince', maybe delicate and with refined manners, and although he is very well behaved indeed in general and has been a joy to have, he is a very sneaky garden shoe and slipper stealer. My garden Crocs used to live by the back door, but as soon as my back is turned one of them disappears down the garden. Marley thinks it is great fun as suddenly he has all my attention chasing him round with his new 'toy'! He is so very pleased with himself as he trots across the patio with the shoe (or slipper if the Crocs have been put out of reach) in his mouth.

But I don't mind in the slightest. Marley has been the light of our lockdown, keeping me company curled up in his basket next to me whilst I'm working from home and giving me the best excuse to get out and about throughout. And he didn't complain about the bad home haircut I attempted before the Poodle Parlours re-opened! Although a temporary foster, Covid-19 has unfortunately delayed Marley's Mum's planned operations, so here we are in July and he is still with us – he made my birthday celebrations in June complete with one of my favourite things; a walk along the beach with a doggy friend.

It will now be very difficult to say goodbye, so I am making the most of the time Marley is with us and we hope he'll still be able to come on holiday to Devon with us in a couple of weeks' time before he goes home to his Mum. Strange times indeed, and therefore a longer than normal temporary foster, which has given us more time to fall in love with Marley. But we know how desperately we would have wanted Ruspur home with us if he had needed to be cared for elsewhere for a time, so completely understand that Marley's Mum must have her dearly loved companion back at home as soon as she is able to."



**Julie Brooks** writes from Monmouthshire:

"I would love to have a dog, but my husband is not keen, so the next best thing is to borrow other peoples'. I used to walk a neighbour's dog while she was at work. She was happy her dog was not home alone all day and I had lovely walks out with her gorgeous Labrador. However, I recently moved house and was no longer nearby. I now live in the beautiful Wye Valley where there are superb walking routes all around me.



I had heard of The Cinnamon Trust and looked them up online. Reading the information on their website I decided this would be ideal for me. After enrolling as a volunteer, I had a message that a Terrier 'Jack' was in need of walking as his owner Richard had poor mobility. He lived a few miles away, but we had fine fun exploring his home environs a couple of times a week or whenever I was in their area.

Then The Cinnamon Trust rang me to say that unfortunately Richard had fallen and been taken to hospital and asked if I would be willing to take care of Jack at home. I was sorry to hear about Richard but delighted to be able to help. Fortunately, Jack seemed to enjoy a few weeks in the countryside and we were able to go walking at least twice every day. We just did half hour walks initially as that

was what he was used to, but it soon became apparent that he wanted to go further. We had a great time together, getting to know footpaths new to me as well as introducing him to some of my favourite places. We met local animals, which I was quite nervous about, as Richard always said to keep him away from other dogs as he could be a bit nasty. He was fine. I kept him on a lead and assessed each situation as it arose, ready to back off as necessary, but the country air must have mellowed his temper as he met cattle, sheep, horses and other dogs. Only once did he snap, when an overzealous Alsatian sniffed him a bit too much. Fair enough, I pulled him back and no harm was done.

Throughout his fostering The Cinnamon Trust kept in contact, letting me know how Richard was doing and offering support and advice. When Richard came home, I was asked to keep Jack for a few days to ensure he was settled and able to cope at home. Taking Jack back was quite moving; to see him reunited with his Dad was touching. Although I was sorry to see him go, I was glad to have helped out. He now squeals with excitement when I turn up for our walks."



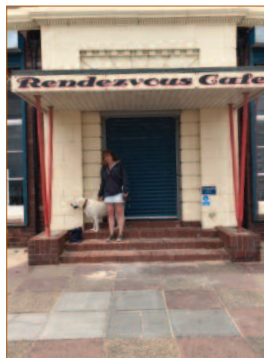
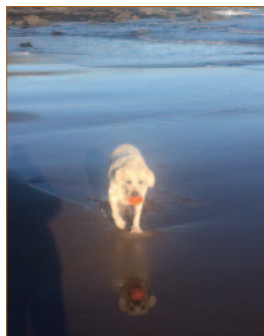
And this is from **Janice Thompson** in Newcastle:

"I have been walking Charley, a lovely 11-year-old golden Labrador since last September and this increased to five times a week during lockdown as I had more time on my hands. On one of my visits Michael, Charley's owner, said he felt quite

poorly. The doctor was called and Michael was rushed into hospital. I called The Cinnamon Trust 24 hour emergency line as it says to do in our handbook and asked what I should do. They asked if I could look after Charley and I happily said “yes”. I was able to reassure Michael that this was the plan; he was so relieved.

Charley settled in well and enjoyed daily walks on the beach, swimming, chasing her ball and sitting watching the world go by. Sometimes she invited herself to nearby picnics, after anything tasty she could sniff out! We went to the Rendezvous Cafe where Michael used to take her, she seemed to recognise the place and was disappointed they were only open for takeaways! Kyle from The Cinnamon Trust Head Office kept in regular contact with Michael and myself so I felt fully supported throughout and, of course, Michael loved hearing about how Charley was doing.

We had the pleasure of Charley staying for two weeks, she was no trouble and on her best behaviour. Michael is back home, recovering well and delighted to be reunited with Charley; she means the world to him.”



So how are our 1,373 lifelong foster pets getting on? Here are some lovely updates. First, **Curly** (12) rules the roost in Cornwall with **Caroline** and **Lily Schofield**.

“In December 2018 my daughter Lily and I (and Daphne our poodle) braved the weather and flew to pick up dear little Curly from Hayle following her mum passing away. She made herself at home as soon as we opened the front door by demanding her dinner! She slept on Lily’s bed that first night and that has been her bed ever since.

A list of Curly’s characteristics, adventures etc: For a few weeks when she first arrived I had the impression that she was ‘enduring’ her new life even though she seemed happy enough and bossy! Then, one day, the expression in her eyes changed and she decided she was home.

She quickly discovered where the vegetable rack was and made regular raids stealing carrots and sweet potatoes (her favourites) - she pulled the whole rack over with her tiny little jaw! She learned to play, which was a joy. We bought her a Kong and put her special dietary biscuits inside, she had a great time nudging it





**Daphne, Lily and Curly**

around and getting furious when it got stuck - a good way for her to eat and get exercise. Daphne follows her around picking up stray biscuits!

We took her to the local chapel where my daughter practices the organ - it had an extraordinary effect on her: she started doing zoomies across the carpet and scampered about like a young pup instead of a sedate and older lady!

She has been on holiday to Mullion hotel twice (third time coming up) where all the staff fell in love with her and Curly immediately made herself at home on the luxurious beds!

She has been to two Christmas parties at our local Pet Care Salon. She does disgrace herself a little though as she barks and twists her head and pricks her ears to everyone, expecting food!!! She looks so adorable when she does it, and her bark isn't grating at all, but I have to carefully monitor what she eats because of her health issues (she's had kidney stones in the past and had cruciate repairs).



As she is slowing down we have bought her a pushchair which we pad with a red velvet cushion. People in St Just envy her 'throne'! With regard to walking, I discovered that although she may lag and seem reluctant when we first go for a walk, if I carry her or put her in her pushchair on the way she scampers back home like a youngster - we think most likely because there is food at the end! This theory seems to be proven since we took her to visit a friend who always has treats for dogs. Curly has decided that it's now no trouble to walk all the way up the road! Hmm!

This little dog has brought so much joy into our lives. We love her so very much. She rules our home and any visiting dogs. She has the nicest character of any dog I've ever known. I am grateful to The Cinnamon Trust for allowing us to have this little sweetheart in our home and we haven't regretted for one moment taking her into our lives."

**Kai** (11) in Warwickshire with **Clare Stradling** prompts this moving view:

“Kai has been with us now for 3 years, but I am only now coming around to writing this as an acknowledgement that I don’t think I would have got through the last year without him. When we were going through a really difficult period during my daughter’s mental illness, I would escape with Kai to walk in the woods. He would chase squirrels whilst I cried and screamed and prayed. With our pent-up energies released we were ready to return and continue. Dogs are amazing, aren’t they? Giving you a reason to get out every day and savour nature. Being there, tails wagging, nuzzling and snuggling, desperate to love and be loved.

Anyway, so what’s Kai’s story? Apparently, he was bought as a Labradoodle puppy but returned because he wasn’t curly enough (his neck is curly, but it stops mid back – I think he’s got a bit of Wolfhound in him, not just giant blue poodle). He was then bought by a daughter to keep her father company following the death of her mother. The two boys lived a sedate life together for a few years before the gentleman was hospitalised with a stroke. The Cinnamon Trust stepped in to care for Kai whilst his owner was in hospital. As fosterers, we were due to have Kai for a couple of weeks until his owner went home. The first night, he howled and sat by the door waiting for his owner. He didn’t like us to get in his personal space and definitely did not like our scrappy Terrier, Scruff, in his face all the time. Scruff, however, absolutely loved his new mate and wanted to be with him all the time, mirroring every movement, sleeping right next to him. The feeling was not mutual! Kai growled, but Scruff is pretty stupid and doesn’t do social niceties so would just carry on. In the end Kai just gave up and accepted him. Amazingly, Kai’s owner was discharged to a nursing home near to us (as it was miles from where he lived), so we visited him. It was heart-breaking, Kai sought out his owner, went straight up to him and licked him. Tears rolled down the man’s cheeks. Communication was difficult for us due to the stroke, but Kai managed fine, thanks! We visited regularly until he moved elsewhere and we now send photos so he can see how Kai is doing.



Three years later, Kai is still with us. He has discovered running in woods, chasing squirrels, swimming in canals, rivers, lakes, waves, you name it. Plus holidays in the campervan; he has definitely expanded his repertoire. He is faithful, follows me everywhere, and now even demands cuddles.

As for him and Scruff? Yep, they are best mates. As I write, they are play fighting

over a ball. Kai is teasing Scruff with it, waving it around near his head, so Scruff nips his face, legs, anything (true to type, he is a Terrier) to get Kai to release the ball. As always, Scruff wins. Despite being ¼ of his size, Scruff bullies Kai mercilessly at dinner time. Ever the gentle giant, Kai stands back and waits. Thank you, Cinnamon Trust, for bringing Kai into our lives.”



With a little help from **Carolyn Smith** (Lancashire) **Katy** (9) writes:

“My life in the care of the Cinnamon Trust by Katy (Yorkshire Terrier extraordinaire)



**Katy with her friend Luna**

Looking back, my mum and dad had always given me lots of love and cuddles, and when they started to find it difficult to walk me some lovely volunteers from the Cinnamon Trust used to come every week to take me out for walks. I was always pleased to welcome any visitors to our house and would squeal with delight and excitement. My favourite toy was, and still is, a little white polar bear in a red Christmas hat and I would show it to all my visitors. I particularly loved seeing my Cinnamon Trust walkers and when we went out for walks I always had to protect them from large dogs. I would bark at the dogs whilst wagging my tail just to make sure they knew I was a dog with a mighty attitude just trying to get the first bark in. I still do that now,

but if they come too close to me I just lie down and most of them just ignore me. But if they play a bit rough I can certainly stand up for myself!

Quite suddenly one day in July 2017, after my mum was taken ill, my dad also had to go into hospital and I had no one to look after me and nowhere to go. I was very frightened and worried about where I would end up. The Cinnamon Trust came to the rescue and a kind volunteer put me in her car and said she was taking me to meet somebody called Carolyn, who was hoping to foster me for a few weeks whilst my mum and dad got themselves better.

I was so scared. I don't like cars and just sat and shook all the while but thankfully it wasn't far to Carolyn's. I had to be carried into her home because I was so nervous. I didn't really need to be worried because Carolyn came down to my level and didn't smother me at all. She smelt really nice and I could tell that she was an animal lover, she was very gentle and tickled me behind my ears which I really liked. My belongings were unpacked - food bowls and, of course, my little

white polar bear which is a constant comfort to me.

I sat on the sofa feeling very confused and bewildered. I didn't eat or drink very well for a few days but slowly I got used to my new home and enjoyed exploring the garden. The house was near a big park and I really enjoyed going out for our long walks. I met lots of lovely friendly people including the window cleaner, who always gives me a special fuss, and our regular post lady and postman who always call to me and cross the road to have a chat (and give me a quick tickle). After my long walks it's always good to get home and snuggle up on the sofa and have a lovely snooze.

When my new mum told me one day that her friends were coming to see us and bringing their dog with them, a large Border Collie called Luna, I was rather worried. But Luna was a big softie and she let me be very bossy (which made me feel very superior) but, more importantly, Luna's mum and dad became my new Auntie Jan and Uncle Andy. I loved them both very much straight away. So much so that if my mum goes away for a few days The Cinnamon Trust have agreed with my mum that I can go to their house and stay with them.

In August, The Cinnamon Trust asked my new mum if I could stay with her forever with their support, as my previous mum and dad were very poorly and were not coming home. Whilst it was sad about my other mum and dad, I knew that they would always love me.

I am so grateful to the Cinnamon Trust for finding me my new mum. She gives me so many cuddles; we have a very happy life together and love each other very much."



Another Yorkie, **Tara** is at home in Derbyshire with **Nora Luing**...

"When Tara first arrived at my house around 18 months ago, little did I realise how far reaching her effect on me would be. Now that my children have long left home, and the Milk Tray man has forgotten where I live, I knew that a dog would be a great companion and that life would be full of happy times.

Tara is 13-years-old and has proved to be much more than a companion! For example, her owner had worked



**Nora with Tara and grandchildren**



wonders with her in training. When I sit down to have food she has a very special way of lying down reserved just for those times - it is SO endearing! She lies very quietly, and in a curve, as though she is a ballerina in Swan Lake.

Tara is patient, loving and caring and never complains.... the perfect friend. To have the honour of being her lifelong fosterer is by far one of the best joys in my life. She has always sat at the far end of the sofa and will take herself back there after her daily Shiatsu massage (that she sits on her hind legs and requests!).

She is very independent and protective. Now that I have moved house, she has a little woodland we walk in and spends most of the days outside watching the neighbours' cats watching the birds! She seldom barks and quietly rumbles when she recognises the postman's or other familiar vehicles. Anyone unfamiliar will, however, get a firm warning. She recognises our walking routes and stops and looks at me when she doesn't fancy the one we have taken.... hilarious!

How adaptable animals are. A lifetime with her owner and now she has her feet firmly under my table. I think she knows how I am feeling, too. I had upsetting news recently and sat on the sofa without the TV on some evenings. Tara took to sitting behind me on the top of the sofa like an Egyptian cat guarding me. So rewarding. I have a lot of happy days with Tara to thank The Cinnamon Trust for."



**Mary Painter** (Hampshire) loves **Truffle** (5):

"My husband and I owned a beautiful rabbit called Spartacus for 6 years and last October unfortunately she was taken very suddenly ill and passed away the following day. We were so devastated by her loss, but after a while we knew that we couldn't not have a rabbit in the house. Just before Christmas we talked about maybe looking into getting another rabbit in the spring. In late December, I got a call from The Cinnamon Trust saying they had a rabbit in need of a forever foster



home. Although it was sooner than we were thinking, we felt it was meant to be and that's how we ended up fostering Truffle.

Truffle is an absolutely adorable character! He settled in much quicker than we expected him to. He arrived with a few rabbit teddy bears, which he loves to groom, and he also loves to lounge in his bed. He is the softest rabbit I have ever known and he

continues to grow in confidence. He enjoys hopping on and off the sofa and continues to get braver and ever closer to our cat! As the weather has improved we have discovered that he is a sun worshipper! He constantly moves himself in the living room to sit in the sun, acting as a sundial. He has also recently discovered the stairs, however he is very well behaved and a simple whistle sees him heading straight back down. A definite positive of lockdown has been getting to spend more time with our pets, and we were there to experience a first when Truffle and our cat Machiavelli shared the sofa!

Part of us was worried that it might be too painful to have another rabbit, but then you remember that every animal is different and from the moment we saw Truffle we loved him. A lot of people don't realise how incredible rabbits are as pets, so loving and attentive, and they become such a big part of your family because they are always there! We are so grateful to have had this opportunity to give Truffle a loving home and would like to say a huge thank you to The Cinnamon Trust for their support in making it happen!"



**Hansel** (11) and **Harvey** (7) are happily settled with **Diana Rowe** in Devon...

"Hansel and Harvey, two Miniature Long-Haired Dachshunds, came into my life just before 'lockdown' and made such a big difference to me as I live on my own. Hansel, the shaded red, is 11-years-old, very cute and adorable and thinks humans are big armchairs that he has the right to sit on all day. Harvey, the black and tan, is 7-years-old, as fast as a Whippet and very intelligent. He has got himself into trouble a few times, but we won't dwell on that!



These two posh boys lived in Surrey with their elderly owner until she passed away. Alas, they then found themselves in reduced circumstances; no more Hunter Wellingtons or Volvo estate cars, but sent to kennels for several months by social services and then, compounded by difficulties with a poorly executor, nobody could make a decision as to what to do with them; poor souls. The Cinnamon Trust had walked the dogs in the past and heard of their plight. They immediately took the matter in hand and reassured all parties they would find them a 'forever home' together.

I lost my beloved Ollie, also a Cinnamon pet and Miniature red shaded, Long-

Haired Dachshund, 3 years ago. I had only just been able to open my heart again to having another little full-time dog, but it was a bit of a shock to be offered a twosome!! During those 3 years I enjoyed having some delightful short-term visitors, but, like grandchildren, they eventually went home again. I never thought I would find such a wonderful dog as Ollie again, but now I cannot imagine my life without these two little chaps. I will always be grateful to The Cinnamon Trust for allowing me the honour of having them.

When I collected these boys from the kennels in Surrey, I was greeted by 2 bedraggled and matted little souls. So, we went straight to the beauty parlour for some attention after which two very handsome Dachshunds appeared. After bringing them home to Devon, poor Hansel had to visit the vet and was scheduled within days to have an operation on a very large hernia. Several teeth were also extracted and his 'personal bits' removed. He was very stoic considering he was sore at both ends and in the middle, but within days he was happily crunching biscuits again.

Now, we are all together in rural Devon. Whenever we walk around our village they are affectionately known as 'the boys' from No 14. The 'boys' have settled down exceedingly well, sleep in the bed, not on it and demand home cooked food - no tinned food for these posh Surrey boys!! They enjoy going for walks and being admired by everybody.

I love them so, so much."



In Gwent, **Kiera Nixon** writes about **Rupert** and **Josh**

"I'd like to tell you a story of a cat with 27 lives. At least.

Rupert needed so many because he formed so many one sided friendships. Next



door's cat loathing Alsatian was one and Mr Bully the neighbourhood unneutered Tom was another example. In fact, he gave out so much unconditional love that if he didn't look so much like a cat you'd be forgiven for thinking him a Golden Retriever. He came on long walks, wagged his trampled broken tail, and would high-five anyone one who'd offer. There was no such thing as over-loving Rupert, at least in his opinion, and if he

wasn't curled up on your lap he was mewling his pathetic "ow, ow" for your attention.

Has anyone ever said that cats bring people together? It's true. Rupert once took me to his second home where the humans there had taken pity on his meticulously maintained scraggly appearance. When they found out that



Rupert was actually already fed and looked after, they focused their attentions on Mr Bully instead, adopting him and exchanging his manhood for a pleasant personality that Rupert just adored. Rupert also had a girlfriend. A sleek black feline called Amber who came to visit him regularly to touch noses.

But the most important relationship in his life was the cat he'd landed into my life with – Josh. Now Josh is a real cat, in every sense of the word, big and beautiful with that scathing look and tendency to lick himself without a moment's notice. Josh was in charge. Or tried to be. He attempted to teach his housemate cattiquette – "If I'm on this lap, go find your own." Or "show some self-respect and turn away from humans now and again." It never worked and Josh, patiently in his cat-like way, accepted that Rupert would never be like him. Occasionally he'd break, especially when Rupert sharpened his claws on the long plank of wood Josh pawed, sniffed and loved above all others. He'd chase him across the fields. But Rupert never learnt.

I think, like me, Josh never got to the bottom of the Rupert conundrum. This cat was either incredibly intelligent or incredibly stupid. How many accidents and near misses could one creature have and still not understand that it was a bad idea to sit behind the wheels of a reversing car, or antagonise a growling dog?

But maybe he just didn't want to accept living with the cynicism and fear that many others do. Maybe he chose joy and love.

Thank you Cinnamon Trust for bringing him into my life, and I'm sure I speak for Josh too when I say that I know twenty seven is a lot more lives than most other cats get, but I do wish Rupert could have had a few more to spend with us. He died in May from renal failure."



**Helen Harris** (Kent) wasn't going to keep **Polly**, but....

"Please meet Precious Princess Polly, our 'short term' foster dog.



After our own dog died, I had increased my hours at work so we felt it wouldn't be fair to have another pet at that time. I missed having the company of a dog though, so a friend suggested I sign up as a volunteer dog walker with The Cinnamon Trust. In due course The Trust asked me if I could help out with a 6-year-old French Bulldog belonging to a lady who had difficulty walking.



Polly the Frenchie was always so happy to see me, although she had issues with leaving the front garden to be taken for a walk. I could often be seen trying to coax her along, armed with a large supply of biscuits. Eventually we could make it round the block, but with her running as soon as she knew she was near home!

I made friends with Mary, Polly's owner, and we would have a chat after the 'walk', along with tea or coffee, often in her summer house in the garden. Polly would come and join us, jumping up on a spare chair or me.

Mary had no close relatives and she thought the world of Polly. Sadly, one weekend Mary was suddenly taken ill and never recovered. She was taken to hospital but died two days later. I was asked to help out by The Trust and take Polly in as a temporary foster. I agreed, but Polly was always going to be our 'short-term' foster dog, because, as I assured my friends, we could not keep her. Oddly, they all felt that she wouldn't be going anywhere. I really didn't think we had time to keep her, as we still worked a little, but our neighbour kindly helped out by offering to have her during the days we worked. Polly loves him, and when she sees him out and about knows that she will always get a dog treat, so they are great friends.

I'd like to think that if Mary was around she would see that we are looking after her little girl. We love Polly and she makes us laugh with her quirky ways. She will sit for a treat, but only if there is carpet to sit on, NEVER on the bare floor. She is happiest when she is by your side on the settee, snoring her head off, but suddenly wide awake when a biscuit packet is touched. My husband has now retired, so he is at home with her almost all the time.

She has been with us over four years now, and she is definitely staying with us - my friends were right all along."



**Minx** has made herself at home with **Ann** and **Neil MacSorley** in Cardiff:

“The Cinnamon Trust enabled Minx to join our little family of hubby, Frankie our beloved cat and me in July 2014 with her flat-mate, Sumo. Being house cats they lived very safely and happily with us while Frankie, who’d been feral before moving in with us not long before the girls, continued his free spirit lifestyle. Sumo sadly died of cancer in November 2015 and then in April 2018 our Frankie also passed away.



Minx has developed her personality since becoming an only cat. Where she used to wallop you if you put your hand out to her, she now positively and loudly demands you scratch her chin or rub her head at every opportunity. She’s learned the benefits of a lap cuddle. Talks constantly to let us know what she wants. Reminds us when it’s food time, asks for the bathroom door to be opened if the ‘staff’ have closed it when she needs her litter tray. Sits and shouts when she wants to play or if she thinks we’re not paying her enough attention.

Her favourite game is leaping athletically after a long white shoe lace if we’re available to play, or else beating up a piece of cardboard torn from the end of the oval section you tear from a tissue box when you open it. This has been a favourite for a fair while and the house has many tattered bits of blue cardboard sticking out from unlikely places. At bedtime, she brings her favourite soft toy crab upstairs - once she’s satisfied we’re both tucked up in bed she races off down the stairs and we hear her trilling and singing to him. Then, her voice warbles as she bounces up the stairs with him in her mouth to deposit him in the bedroom with relish and a triumphant final shout!

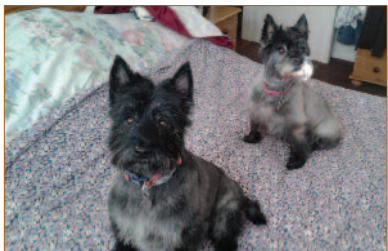
We had the world’s smallest extension put on our tiny house this year and a door was installed in the side of it specifically to give her access to her outside enclosure. The builder said it was the first time he’d designed a building with a door for a cat. She and I spent hours out there in the balmy summer evenings watching hedgehogs enjoying our garden.

Minx is 11 now and has a weakness in one back leg, she has check-ups for it at the vet and anti-inflammatory drugs to make it easier for her which The Trust kindly pay for and for which we’re very grateful. She’s a happy, well balanced little cat and is a delight to share our home with. She gives me a reason to get out of bed every day and is a good friend to have around.”



**Susan Leggatt** in Hampshire welcomed **Bryn** and **Isla**.

"In March 2018 our world suddenly fell apart. Dilly, my 16-year-old Lakeland X Yorkie, had a stroke and sadly had to be put to sleep. We rescued her at 6 months old. She was my shadow, my soulmate.



In July 2018 I registered on the short term fostering list. A few weeks later I phoned Head Office and spoke to Moira, and I will never forget her words: "I came into work today determined to find a foster home for 2 Cairn Terriers, a brother and sister called Bryn and Isla". Following a home check, a week later on

Saturday 15th September 2018 they arrived from Stafford. Luckily we have quite a large garden, so they both had a great time exploring every inch, trying to chase the chickens! We will never forget that day when Bryn and Isla came into our lives and into our hearts.

They have very different characters. Sometimes Bryn can look very fierce, but he is really a big softy, follows me everywhere, keeping me in sight at all times. Isla is very independent like a cat, she loves to sit in the garden, chasing any squirrels who dare enter, howling when she hears sirens, planes, or helicopters. They give all visitors a lovely welcome, especially the grandchildren. Once greeted, they both go and lay down. Two daily walks, which they always look forward to. We have lots of cuddles.

Bryn sleeps on my side of the bed in his basket, Isla (her choice) sleeps in her basket in the dining room. Often we wake in the morning to find her on the end of the bed!

We feel very privileged that Bryn and Isla have settled in so well. They trust us and in return we get so much love back."



And **Christine McMillan** (Berkshire) sent this:

"In memory of Dorothea Howman - Cat fosterer and fundraiser

After dad died, and Duffy our dog passed away soon after, mum contacted The Cinnamon Trust (I've no idea to this day how she found you). She joined as a volunteer but then came a heart by-pass operation in 2006 and when she recovered she knew she couldn't walk a dog so she contacted The Trust and asked if they had a cat she could foster.

And so we had our cat characters. First there was the very fiery, feisty Susie. Even the vet and the nurses suggested this was a cat that had an attitude problem. The Trust was concerned and suggested that if she wanted to, everyone would understand if she gave Susie up. She was a very short tempered cat. But no! Mum continued and even if no one else could get to grips with her, mum did!



Next came a pair of ginger cats. They were female gingers. Pinky Pork Chops (Pinky for short on account of her pink nose was her given name) and Amber which sort of described her paler shade of ginger. These two hated each other. As soon as they were let out of their cages, as the accompanying note said, they had their routine. Amber headed for upstairs! The stairs themselves were 'neutral' territory but it could be a quick nose rub or a very loud hissy fit!



After the gingers came Mindy, and her half-brother Woody. Mindy was tiny, black and white. Woody was large and the colour of a tree branch. A very handsome boy. His sister was domineering and Woody was terrified of her. He lived upstairs and Mindy downstairs. It took a lot of coaxing for me to see him but one day he ventured into the living room and hid behind a chair. All my photos were hard won!



Mum's final cat was extra-special. Bramble was profoundly deaf. She took to mum at first sight and followed her everywhere indoors but refused to go outside very often. Mum believed that fostering for The Cinnamon Trust was as specific as fostering a child. She absolutely refused to leave Bramble despite her own poor health and I was not able to arrange for mum to go into a home until after Bramble passed away.

Covid-19 meant I wasn't able to see mum for the last few weeks of her life, but she was still occasionally asking for Bramble. We decorated her room with one photo of every cat she had had and I labelled them so staff could talk to her if she asked for them.

Mum had some very feisty cats from The Cinnamon Trust, as well as some trusting ones. Each one learned to love her and were very well behaved by the end of their lives. Thank you for 14 or so years of cat characters."



To all our registered volunteers, thank you, especially this year! You never gave up, you kept bringing sunshine into 143,871 lives – as well as comfort, laughter.... and the groceries! Absolutely brilliant. A very, very special and vital part of the ‘Cinnamon Family’.

### **Gold Awards for exceptional service go to:**

**Sue Ryder** (West Yorkshire), **Richard LeFevre** (Norfolk) and **Jane Floodgate** (Norfolk).

### **Long Service Awards (over 10 years) go to:**

**Valerie Cole** (Derbyshire), **Diane Smith** (Devon), **Kathy Beevers** (West Yorkshire), **Cathy Care** (East Sussex), **Pam Freeland** (Wiltshire), **Susan Bennett** (Gloucestershire), **Mary Vallance** (Oxfordshire), **Penny Dickens** (East Sussex), **Josephine Darling** (Berkshire), **Irene Francis** (Dyfed), **John Howarth** (Somerset), **Vivienne Goldberg** (London), **Heather Watson** (Cheshire), **Kevin** and **Sandra Pridgen** (Lincolnshire), **Pamela Tapia** (Cornwall) and **Shirley Woodhouse** (Cornwall).

### **And Special Owner Nominated Awards go to:**

**Paul Merritt** (Nottinghamshire), **Tracy Bell** (Nottinghamshire), **Patricia Straw** (Nottinghamshire), **Bruce Mead** (Dorset), **Julia Hyde** (Dorset), **Jan Farrell** (Dorset), **Elaine Blanchard** (Dorset), **Donald Stoye** (Dorset) and **Kate Evans** (Berkshire).



### **Pet Friendly Care Homes**

We won't dwell on the dreadful time the care homes have had, save to say our hearts go out to you and I hope it gets MUCH better by Christmas....

Here, let's focus on a few happy snippets. Proof, as if we need any, of the magic of pets anytime, anywhere....

### **Bramley House** (Surrey)



**Nancy** went into one of our Pet Friendly Care Homes, Bramley House in Westcott a couple of years ago. She had a cat, **Cleo**, who she adopted eight years previously that had been a stray. When she decided to move into the home, she thought it was best for Cleo to

move in with her neighbour who agreed to look after her. Just two weeks after Nancy arrived at the nursing home, staff noticed that a rather affectionate cat was hanging around outside. She was sleeping just in front of the home and looking

through the windows, as if she was looking for something or someone. Since she showed no signs of going anywhere, the staff began to feed her. And it helped that she was very sweet. When Nancy saw the cat for the first time, she recognised her, but couldn't be completely sure. However, there was something strikingly different about Cleo: she was missing a significant part of her tail. The staff checked, and this cat was missing part of her tail too! It was obvious that it was Cleo who had arrived at the nursing home. Nobody could work out how Cleo managed to track Nancy down, especially since the nursing home was so far from Nancy's previous home and there's no way she could have followed her!

Staff at Bramley House were delighted to have Cleo to stay – she and Nancy have been inseparable ever since!



### **Dunster Lodge** (Minehead, Somerset)

Dunster Lodge is home to several pets, including **Miss D** who was the rather overweight and devoted pet of a resident who sadly died. Manager **Gillian Parry** began to coax the grieving cat slowly out of the room, a little bit further each day, until she tentatively began to recover and explore her surroundings. She is now the pride of the home - fit and lean and very happy.



She explores all day in the countryside and is adored by all who live here. She shows incredible empathy with residents when they are at end of life and will not leave their side until they have passed away peacefully; she seems to know when a resident is near the end and sits close to them for comfort.

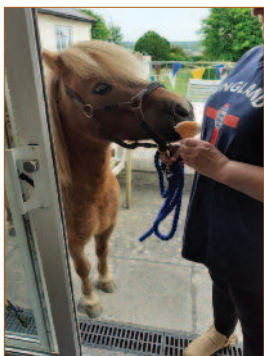


### **Highcliffe Nursing Care Home** (Christchurch, Dorset)

**Sheila** has dementia and for a short time when she arrived at the home she struggled a bit. She had lost her home and, quite recently, her husband and it took some time for her to get used to all the new routines, places and people. She is much better now and having her dog with her during this time helped enormously. **Bugsy** on the other hand settled in immediately visiting everyone in the offices and sitting with the staff. Everyone loves him, including the other residents, and he's getting lots of attention and care. He has also been attending the keep fit classes and has even been guest of

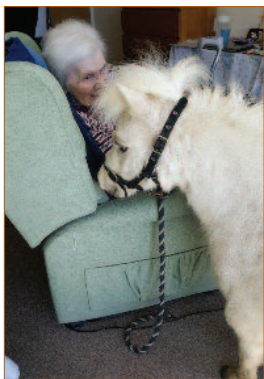


honour at another resident's birthday party!



**Fairfield Country Rest Home** (Bude, Cornwall) is a lovely care home in the Cornish countryside. Presently in residence is **Robbie** the African Grey Parrot and 2 ponies called **Georgie** and **Chippy** who belong to the home. Chippy is a tiny Shetland, a palliative care pet who has brought great comfort to many people. He loves to be fussed but his favourite thing is to watch the horse racing on the TV in the lounge with the residents!

They recently had a BBQ for residents and for those that did not want to come out into the grounds the care manager, **Helen Goodgrove**, and Chippy popped in through the patio doors to say hello to those indoors, and at the same time had a sneaky ice cream (well, it was hot!)



The other small pony **Midget** is an American Miniature horse who loves going room to room to say hello to everyone!

Helen is a passionate animal lover and is keen to point out that the longer a resident can care for a pet themselves, the more beneficial to both pet and owner and they will support anyone with the care of their pet.



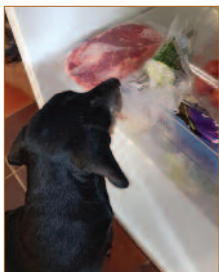
And lastly, a quick word from **Sinbad**, a beautiful greyhound, Canine Relations Manager at **Mildenhall Lodge Care Home** in Suffolk...

"People call me docile, but I prefer 'gentle and affectionate'. I like to go around the home collecting cuddles and making the residents smile – it's just a natural gift I have. I like to 'help out' around the home too, particularly if food is involved. People are always saying they'd like to take me home, but I've finally found my best home ever, and I'm not going anywhere!"

Manager **Katy Hughes**, said "We gave Sinbad, our much-loved dog, a home when residents decided that they'd like a canine friend. In no time at all he became the star of Mildenhall Lodge. He'll often sit with residents who are being nursed in bed, and even managed to tempt one resident who likes to stay in their room to come downstairs for a cuddle."

## Poldarves Farm Sanctuary

Our summer story is best told in pictures!



**Jonas** chooses the barbeque food....

....While **Ginger** basks in the shade....



....**Peppa** tries out her new mud wallow for size....

....And **Mitzi** splashes in the pool and plays with the hose....



.... **Harry** wants more sloe berries....



....**Murphy** wants his walk....



.... And the **goose** ran away with the brush....





Then a wild duck decided to make Poldarves home and nested in the clematis in the cat gardens!! When the babies hatched she took them off to the duck pond – all survived fit and well!

We've had so much fun and could probably fill a newsletter with candid

camera shots! The fun, as ever, has been tempered at times with very sad losses:

**Rusty** (16) and **Bella** (17) dearest little Jack Russells who came together and we lost them within a week of each other. Four gorgeous cats – **Jimmy** (20), **Sheikh** (10), **Tabitha** (21) and **Gracie** (14). **Heidi** (15) Jack Russell, **Fred** (17) Mini Shorthaired Dachshund, **Carla** (12) Cocker Spaniel and **Bobo** (18) Jack Russell have all left us with memories to cherish and a host of photos in the album to remind us of the wonderful times we had together.



**Diesel** (15) can't fail but cheer everyone up! He's a very happy, loving, smiling boy. He loves everyone and everything. Walks on the beach, in the fields, by the river – he likes to paddle in the river but not the sea! He loves to be cuddled and groomed and he gets so excited when dinner comes out of the Aga – his teeth chatter and his whole body shakes! And as soon as he sees any of us with a cup he runs to the lounge as it must be break time and that means biscuits! When he needs a rest he lies down flat with his back legs stuck out behind him – what a character!



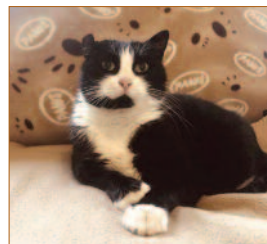
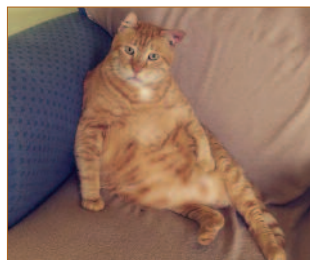
**Murphy** (13) is an explorer, but exploration can be trying because he just has to come back and check what you're doing – often! He's very, very loving and he likes to show you what he's doing, so he tells you to come with him – literally fetches you.... And he fetches his tennis ball, over and over. He arrived with a huge bag of tennis balls and now we know how much he loves a ball! Murphy is also a very clever boy – he works out the interactive 'brain games' far too quickly. He doesn't start out too early though – a lie in until breakfast is served will do very nicely!



**Milo** (16) has a new best friend, our Archie, and he follows him around everywhere. He especially likes being out in the garden unless its meal time, and he knows when meal times are! He sits on your feet (so he gets fed first) and cheers you on very loudly – he's most partial to a nice piece of fresh salmon! Milo

is generally quite a chatterbox, but so happy and cuddly he makes you smile – a lot!

**Ginger** (15) and **Tuxedo** (15) came together. Ginger loves to cuddle Tuxedo and she doesn't mind – up to a point when she will suddenly give him a whack and walk off! But she always sleeps close by him – with her front paws crossed.... She is lovely, very friendly and cute with a quiet little voice. She loves all her food but really loves fish. She does like to laze in the sunshine and use the arm of the sofa as a tummy scratch if you're not available! Ginger is a big boy and he always sits like this! He is very much a lap cat, just can't get enough of cuddles! He also loves a tummy rub and sunbathing. He likes to play with balls made of tin foil and he loves the garden, but he needs a doorman because he can't fit through the cat flap! He always manages to look very comfy and relaxed – see him in the summer story! And clearly, Ginger loves his food – but fresh, please....



Well, we've started checking all the winter woolies and the ponies' rugs. We're well stocked up with logs for the fire and we've had new windows fitted so we'll be super snug! The tortoises will be asleep, so they miss Christmas, but for everyone else at Poldarves – there's magic to come!



## Hillside Farm Sanctuary

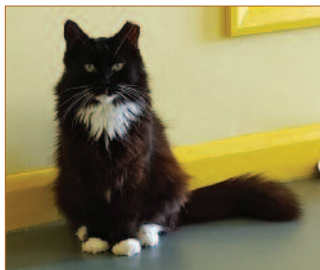
We've created lovely sensory gardens for the cats and dogs – and a sand pit for the dogs. The cats have eaten half the herbs and grasses and we've had to re-plant several times!

The new outdoor area for the tortoises has proved a hit with **Smash** and **Grab** who have hugely enjoyed picnicking on the specially chosen plants and flowers.

We now have two stream-side picnic areas which have been very well used and thoroughly enjoyed – well, a picnic means Scotch eggs and sausage rolls, homemade lollies and ice-cream!

The deer have been out and about with their fawns, the pheasants (ever hopeful) stalk the chicken run and the bird feeders. The horses and sheep have loved the apples and blackberries – the fruit has been fantastic this year, we even had enough plums to make jam!

All the good cheer was needed to see us through the sad times. We've lost eight gorgeous cats – **Breezer** (18), **Specs** (21), **Sophie** (20), **Heaven** (18), **Tenners** (17), **Bandit** (19), **Mr Tootsie** (11) and **Bella** (12). Then our gentle giant **Lola Bear** (14) Pyrenean Mountain Dog; **Del Boy** (14) Bichon cross; **Rosie** (15) Westie, **Dee Dee** (16) Westie, **Tilly** (14) German Shepherd cross. Also **Lamby** (16) our Blue Faced Leicester sheep and **Big Barney** (26) our Thoroughbred Bay horse. Two things are guaranteed – first, none will be forgotten and second, new arrivals who won't replace, but can fill the gaps.



**Long Victor** (11) is a very handsome boy. He loves cuddles and really nestles into your neck and rubs its chin on it and if you try to stop, a paw pulls you back! And he's playful – he chases toys and will turn cartwheels for catnip. He's also a supervisor, he oversees all the evening routine sitting in the doorways and watching every move and as you pass him each time, he stretches his little head towards you for a good scratch!



Tom Tom



Lady

**Tom Tom** (16) always wants a snuggle one to one cuddle and lots of fuss. He's big, gorgeous and has a very wise, all-knowing look about him, as if he can see deep into your soul. He's a gourmet and fresh cooked chicken passes muster every time! He came with **Lady** (14) who would rather sunbathe than spend too much time with him, poor

boy!! She also enjoys her food but cuddles only when she's in the mood. She adores being groomed and wriggles and squirms and presents every bit of her body and if you dare stop she grabs the brush. Lady reminds us of a Lioness surveying her kingdom from a tall vantage point - but she won't eat you.



**Benji** (13½) is such a sweet boy and always so happy to see you. He loves his food and lets you know if you are taking too long in preparing it – he sounds more like a hound than a Cocker Spaniel! Once served his meals don't touch the sides. That said, he's super friendly, loves everyone (and all the other dogs) and a sofa snuggle is tops! He came in with a cloth 'carrier bag' which he

takes everywhere and sleeps with - preferably in front of the range.

**Nina** (8) is a big, beautiful, bouncy girl, full of life and she's cheeky! She steals the tea towels, makes off and buries them in the garden given half a chance. She loves to run in the fields and encourage everyone and anyone to play chase with her. And soft toys don't stand a chance! She will de-stuff one with enormous enthusiasm and then abandon it to start again!! All this activity equals a very healthy appetite! Another who loves a cuddle and when she is excited, she jumps on the sofa and roly-polys with her legs in the air waiting for tummy tickles.



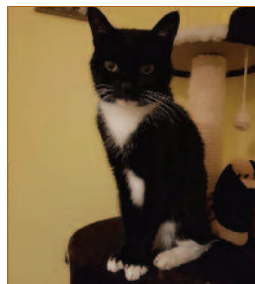
**Billy Boy** (11) is adorable. Quite shy to start but he's coming out of himself quite quickly! He loves to be outdoors in the garden or the little outdoor shelters and he does love his food – fresh cooked is best - chicken or fish! He loves having his ears rubbed and come these colder nights, he tucks himself right into the radiator beds.



**Charlie Brown** (10) is paraplegic with his own set of wheels – he's very fast and very cheeky and really determined! He will get his own way – whether it's a bed already occupied, something out of the fridge, or a whizz round the garden – all with an irresistible woof and a smile that melts you. An amazing, adorable little man. He loves teddy bears and he gently nibbles them all over then throws them, catches them, and starts all over again, finally he removes the squeaks!



Another **Charlie** (12) is a tall boy! He could be wearing a dinner jacket, his white markings are so uniform and perfect. He's very affectionate and nosey! He goes from room to room, garden to garden, to see what's going on and make sure he doesn't miss anything – he's a great climber, too, with those long, long legs. A very happy boy, who supervises meal time and checks out all the cupboards with the loudest purr ever, all the while doing figure of eights around your legs.



**Kyla** (14) and **Zoe** (9) came together and they adore each other. They do everything together: sleep with each other, eat with each other, play with each other. They are both gorgeous. Kyla is very gentle and calm, Zoe is bouncy – both love their walks, and both come when they are ready, not when you call them. We think Kyla is a bit





Kyla



Zoe

deaf and she relies on Zoe who feigns deafness!! They both love their food and soft toys – Kyla carries them around, Zoe de-stuffs them! They both love cuddles and lots of attention – Zoe presses the point home with a well-placed paw! They both loved being groomed.



**Monty** (16) is a confident, mischievous handsome boy. He is also very, very curious – he investigates everything whether it's what you're doing, or what another cat is doing. He likes to play and he likes attention but on his terms only! He's partial to shoe laces and grabs your feet so you can't get away! When he's finished his own dinner, or lunch, or breakfast - he checks out everyone else's dishes in case they have left a tasty morsel or two. Monty clearly believes himself a Very Important Cat and who are we to disagree?



**Buster** (9) Another Golden Retriever! He's a big, chunky, cuddly, adorable, happy boy. He loves his food, which is good, because he's on a bit of a diet meaning lots of veg and bran sticks with his fresh meat and he scoffs the lot! He **is** a big boy which somehow makes it all the more aaah! when he comes to show you, with great pride, his latest prize soft toy, which you can admire but you cannot have!



**Priscilla** (14) has only just arrived and she is beautiful. Very petite. We already know she enjoys her food, loves to climb and loves the great outdoors. So far, if she wants a cuddle, she'll ask – if not, don't! And she has a lovely deep purr.

The trees are dropping their leaves, the dogs and cats are helping to scatter them everywhere! Our Halloween party beckons as does Christmas – decorating the houses, wrapping the presents, planning the menus and – who knows – it might snow!



## Poetry Corner

Our first poem is just lovely, written by **Liz Diamond**

### A Secret

We have a secret, you and I  
That no-one else shall know  
For who but I can see you lie  
Each night in the fire glow?  
And who but I can reach my hand  
Before we go to bed  
And feel the living warmth of you  
And touch your silken head?  
And only I walk woodland paths  
And see ahead of me  
Your dark form racing with the wind  
So young again and free  
And only I can see you swim  
In every stream I pass  
And when I call, no-one but I  
Can see the bending grass.

And this is perfect for Christmas, sent in by **David Bolton** and written by **Mary Levick-Atkins**:

### Away In A Manger

The little black cat knew her time had come.  
But she was a stray and had no home.  
The leaf-lined hollow where she lay was chill,  
The wind-blown bracken thin, and offering little shelter,  
Boding ill for her coming litter.

She sensed that near was warmth and  
shelter from the winter's bitter blast,  
And watched the ladies with their secateurs  
Trim and cut the holly in the Church's porch  
And twine the ivy, and arrange the pure whiteness of  
the flowers until, at last they left.

The open door invited, and she crept within  
With footfall soft and deft.  
She sniffed the strange sweet harshness of evergreen,

The incense of chrysanthemum, a whiff of fresh warm straw  
And what was more,  
Quite near her quivering whiskers,  
She leapt into the welcoming safety of the manger  
And pushed the Christ-child just a little further on,  
Making room for her, the Stranger.

Christ's Mass dawned,  
And choir and congregation sang, and Heaven with jubilation rang,  
And in the crib's strawed comfort curled the little stray,  
Amber eyes a-blink with love and ecstasy  
On this, HER infant son's birth day.

The children crowded round as children will;  
But in that Holy place she had no fear,  
And joined her rapturous purring song with theirs,  
Just loud enough for God to hear.

### **And finally....**

The pandemic has made this a challenging year, but we didn't just rise to the challenge, we faced it head on. HQ remained open and fully operational throughout. Those that had to self-isolate due to their own health issues worked from home. We recruited 1,300 emergency volunteers, bringing our total to 19,000 and deployed all but a handful to help 90,469 people with 91,949 pets. Well done and an enormous thank you to all our intrepid volunteers and all the staff, especially Patrick and Marnie at HQ, Emma and Eileen at Poldarves Farm, Julie and Emma at Hillside Farm. And thank you as well to Andy Howarth at DEFRA who was most helpful and designated all of us – staff and volunteers – 'key workers'. I hope at least some of our emergency volunteers will convert to regular status – we can never have too many! I guess we will all be glad to see the back of 2020, and I'm sure we will all look forward with hope.

Christmas approaches with the eternal message of hope and love and this year is drawing to a close. So, perhaps more than ever, I ask you please to pause, raise a glass and remember with undying love and gratitude, absent friends.

It is my fervent hope that you have a happy Christmas and a New Year to truly welcome.

God Bless, everyone.

**Averil R. Jarvis MBE**  
**Founder and Chief Executive**