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EPSOM CANINE RESCUE

Charity No. 1053092

Tel: 01883 334515

Newsletter

A very emotive year

The last year has been a very emotive one, with a dramatic increase in the number of dogs requiring rescue places. It is now quite common for us to have 20 or more dogs on our books at any one time, a far cry from 10 yrs ago when it was 6 – 8!!

Thankfully there are more organisations now, acting as a go between for councils and local rescues, but the need still far exceeds the number of available places. We receive several emails per day from such organisations, working with little or no emergency boarding for these dogs that have already served their statutory 7 day period and face an uncertain future. There is no discrimination, they can be elderly, youngsters or even pups. Public awareness is increasing but 'back street breeders' and puppy farms hoping to make a quick buck with no concern as to the source of their income nor the welfare of the dogs are sadly at the root of the problem.

However, it is not all doom and gloom as we have found some lovely forever homes for our dogs and welcomed a whole new community of volunteers and supporters via our Facebook group and pages. We have new fosterers on board, keen to help and rehabilitate when necessary and these offer a loving 'halfway home' to our orphans until they can find their permanent new mums and dads! Fostering is a great way to help, so please read our article and you never know, we maybe be writing about you next year! We also now have new kennel facilities at one of our foster homes for any long term

residents and those who may need a little more help to find a new home. These are in a relaxed situation, whereby the dogs have the run of the grounds and lots of structured interaction. Marley Moo was one of our longtermers and the lucky chap went to his new home last December and his story is also featured inside.

A good year for fundraising and awareness with volunteers taking part in many sponsored events. Donations have also come in from gifted bespoke craft items and promotional merchandise from our kind supporters – so please take a look at the Goodies link mentioned.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/epsomcaninerescue has also taken off and we have raised over a £1000 via this online shopping link, so all you online shoppers get registered and help us, your favourite charity!! Monthly sponsorship has also proven popular with at least 11 onboard – great if you cannot have your own dog but would like to feel you are helping one of our longtermers and for anyone just wanting to make a donation, please use our Just Giving link as we can claim back the gift aid adding approx. 28% of the money pledged!!

Anyway, over and out and hope you enjoy this newsletter!!!!

**Longtermer
Mama Cass**



Fostering

We desperately need more foster homes to enable us to continue with the work that we do. Fostering is a hugely rewarding experience, and makes a real difference to the dogs in our care. Perhaps you are unable to take on the long-term commitment of a permanent dog at the moment, if so fostering could be the ideal solution for you.

One of the most common things we hear is that I couldn't possibly foster because it would be too hard to give the dogs up or, that it wouldn't be fair on the dog to pass it to another home afterwards.

However, whilst it can sometimes be difficult to let a dog go, we source and vet our new homes carefully; and there is actually nothing better than seeing them settled and happy with loving new families. By letting them go, it also means that you are still in a position to help another needy dog. It also frees up kennel space and means that we can take in more urgent cases such as pound dogs that have served their statutory 7 days and are in danger of being put to sleep.

Occasionally foster homes do "fail" and keep their dog, and that is okay too. It is still a dog that has found its forever home. But each dog touches you differently. Some you enjoy in the moment but some you realise may actually prefer a different lifestyle e.g to live in a busier or a quieter household.

It isn't always easy, you may feel empty for a while when they go. But they leave in the knowledge that you have helped them along that path, and made a huge difference to their lives. That's why so many people choose to foster again and again.

- It may give you a chance to experience breeds you have not considered before.
- Our dogs are happier in a home environment rather than kennels.
- It helps make our dogs easier to re-home, as we can assess them better.
- It makes them more appealing to potential homes as they get to see them in a family environment
- It means that we can re-home dogs more quickly and consequently help greater numbers of dogs.
- You will also learn more about dogs, their behaviour and training.

Our Commitment to you:

- Full behavioural back up & support is given.
- Veterinary fees will be paid.
- Food and equipment can be provided (if needed).
- We will always look to match a suitable dog with you.
- We do not look for weekend or short-term foster placements, as this is very disruptive for our dogs. But, if you need to go away whilst you have a foster dog in your care, we can make other arrangements if needed.

Fosterers Need :

- To live within 20 miles of the RH2 (Reigate) postcode
- To have a securely fenced garden.
- to work part-time or less
- Children to be aged 8+ and confident around dogs.
- Any resident dogs to be neutered, well adjusted and dog friendly.
- Resident cats to be confident & dog savvy.
- To be happy to transport the dog to any assessments, vet visits or new-home meetings as needed. (We will always endeavour to arrange these at mutually convenient times).
- To have dog experience and be confident around dogs. As well as an easy going approach to the ups & downs of living with a dog.
- To understand that any dog will take time to settle which may mean a few accidents and the odd sleepless night initially.
- To be happy to take advice and work to the guidelines we suggest.
- to love Dogs !!



All we ask is that you commit to fostering the dog until they find their forever home.
If you are interested in fostering our dogs, then please visit our website and complete the Homing Questionnaire, stating 'Fostering' in place of the dogs name, and we will give you a call to discuss further.

HELP! I NEED TO RE-HOME MY DOG

One of the most common reasons given by people who contact us about rehoming their dog, is that it's because they don't have enough time for them, and they feel it is unfair on the dog, and that there is a better home out there for them somewhere.

Whilst in a perfect world we would never have to leave our pets for more than a couple of hours, and we would be able to take them for long leisurely walks. The situation in Rescues is now so acute, that a serious rethink is needed. This problem is even more extreme for bullbreeds and bullbreed crosses including staffies.

Unfortunately this now means that a stark reality check is often needed, and (more upsettingly), this almost constitutes a 2 tier system for some breeds of dog.

To put this into context, approximately 9000 dogs are put to sleep each year in this country, simply because there are not enough homes for them all. The vast majority of these are bullbreeds or bullbreed crosses. Probably 70-80% of the calls that we get asking us to re-home dogs are for these breeds. And it is not uncommon for these dogs to spend a year or even longer in rescue waiting for a home due to the increasingly bad press they receive, and peoples ignorance of the breed.

For a small organisation such as Epsom Canine Rescue, where we have on average 15 dogs 'on our books' at any one time, this has a huge impact. In the past 12 months, 4 of our spaces have been taken by dogs that have stayed with us over a year. Effectively reducing our intake capabilities by a quarter.

For those dogs that we are able to help, the reality of spending that length of time in kennels can unfortunately be harsh. And whilst we do our utmost to make dogs comfortable, kennels by their nature are a stark environment, that needs to be easily cleaned. This means concrete floors, plastic beds and washable bedding. The dogs will

have a kennel, run and time spent in a larger paddock each day, but we are reliant on volunteer dog-walkers to provide a respite from the kennels and take our dogs out for a more stimulating walk. This means that dogs will not necessarily get a walk every day and sometimes as little as twice a week. We simply do not always have the manpower or resources to provide more.

Whilst this is okay for a few weeks, or even a couple of months. As an owner looking to re-home your dog due to "lack of time", you really have to consider whether this really is the better option for your dog? I doubt your dog would agree.

You might well have to work full time, or longer hours. But at least your dog gets to curl up next to you on the sofa each evening. It gets to lie on carpet rather than a concrete floor, and half an hour 'round the block' is at least a trip out every day with its new sights & smells.

Taking on a dog is a responsibility, a responsibility to care for them, to socialise them and to train them. But also to be there for them and give them love & stability during rougher times, when life isn't so easy and perfect. There is nowhere, your dog would rather be, than with you.



Ruby & Jakey are two of our longtermers still looking for forever homes. Can you help?

Meeting up with old friends

When you foster a dog you fall in love and the bond between you is made. So when we hold fundraising events it is lovely to see them and their owners back visiting us, no matter how long it has been. Meeting again for fosterers is just great and makes it all very worthwhile.

PLEASE BE SELFLESS...

As a point of interest, being a much older long term member of ECR we often get calls from older, would-be dog owners who sometimes object to completing the inevitable form or questions as to their age and what care & arrangements they could make in case of illness or worse. At least we will negotiate and do not say that age is a factor without a chat but we cannot consider homing a young dog in an older home for obvious reasons. I would only add to my family of two dogs if the dog was 10 plus. It is so rewarding to help an older dog, they need reassurance and love to help them settle into a new routine and usually one finds they are so grateful for another chance. Kennels for an older dog can be very bleak.

— by Audrey

Our smart looking van!
Graphics donated by BossDog.co.uk



LIFE ON THE PHONE ...TAKING CALLS FOR A RESCUE CENTRE



When I was asked to write a piece about what it was like being the first point of contact for a rescue centre, I must admit I had mixed emotions. Would I actually be able to give a realistic idea of what it could be like, do people actually want to know, and could I do it without sounding like a cynical, embittered old woman?

Well the jury is still out, but we thought it would be good to explain how we operate and give an idea of the type of calls we take on a daily basis.

Like most small rescues, ECR is entirely run by volunteers. We have 2 phone numbers, the first generally routes direct to answer phone, where people can leave a message. And the second to a personal mobile phone, which means that calls are picked up whilst we go about our normal daily life. So this can be at home, at the shops, whilst on holiday or doing day-to-day family things.

The majority of calls that we get are for people either looking for a new dog, or those looking to surrender their dog to rescue. The former are generally a fact giving/finding exercise, and the latter.... well, where do you start?

Sympathy, frustrating, heart wrenching, anger inducing - we get them all. Many leave you with a feeling of helplessness, when with limited resources our hands are tied. We also get a lot of emotional pressure applied by some callers, the ultimate of course being that we are forcing them to put their dog to sleep because we won't help.

Don't get me wrong, our dogs come from all backgrounds, and there are also many genuine re-homes due to bereavement, serious illness and where people have exhausted all avenues they can to keep their dogs with them, or to help them find loving, secure new homes. These are the people that work with rescues, understand that we are doing our best, but that we are not miracle workers who can conjure ideal homes at a moments notice.

However I guess these are not so newsworthy, so I will concentrate on some of the more "interesting" ones here!

“ Still on the line” ...Stanley’s Tale

On Christmas Eve we picked up an answer phone message from someone trying to re home their son’s dog because “he was never there anymore and he was fed up of looking after him & couldn’t keep him anymore”. Unfortunately, after leaving contact details, the caller obviously forgot to disconnect the call, and the remainder of the message we heard featured him repeatedly shouting angry, nasty abuse at the poor dog for some perceived misdemeanor. This was obviously something that we were not meant to hear. It was horrible to listen to & was made more distressing because the message had been left some time earlier. When we picked up the message & called back, we were told that the dog had been handed in to the dog warden as a stray, so there was nothing more we could do.

We now believe that this dog was our Stanley, who we took in after New Year at the 11th hour from the Dog Warden. By then he had served well over his statutory 7 days and was on his way to be put to sleep. Luckily for Stanley (with the Christmas holidays over) a kennel became available and we were able to help and take him. Poor Stanley came to us in a very poor state - very thin, with bad skin & ears and had obviously been neglected.

Our thanks go to the Dog Warden who held onto him for longer than she should have (officially) done. He is such a loving soft, affectionate boy...a typical target for bullies you might say.

“The perfect Dog” ... a more light hearted look at a phone call from someone who proves difficult to please!

(To put in in context - I am stood in Hobbycraft buying supplies for my daughter’s school project.)

Caller - Hi I’m looking for a dog.

ECR - Great, what sort of dog are you looking for?

Caller - Err just any dog really .

ECR - If you go onto our website and have a look. You will be able to see all the dogs that we currently have available with lots of pictures &

information about them all, and see if there is any you think might be suitable.

Caller - I don’t have the internet.

ECR - Oh okay , can you give me an idea of what sort of dog you are after then, as we have about 20 in?

Caller - Not really. Could you just tell me a bit more about them all.

ECR - Okay shall we try & narrow this down a bit - what sort of size?

Caller - Small really

ECR - We have various Jack Russell or Terrier types?

Caller - No, I don’t want one of those.

ECR -Um -Yorkie crosses?

Caller - No, don’t want one of those.

ECR - Well that’s all of the small ones really, what about a lovely collie cross boy?

Caller - No, I don’t want one of those.

ECR - Bullbreed ?

Caller - No

ECR - Um mixed breed possibly lurcher/lab cross? (wracking my brain for who else we have in!)

Caller - Not really...

ECR - Well that’s about it at the moment, but we do have a labradoodle coming in later this week.

Caller - Really, yes great , that would be perfect , is it a boy?

ECR - Yes he is.

Caller - Brilliant, how old is he ?

ECR - He’s just over a year if I think.

Caller - Oh dear, no.....we wanted something a bit older. Do you have any, other, older male labradoodles??

No Compassion ...How we are often viewed?

(Again, for context, I am out walking my own dogs, so no pen, paper or access to the internet.)

We receive a call from a lady asking if we can re-home her dog . I explain we probably can’t at the moment , as we are now over our kennel allocation, and the holidays is a difficult time for many small rescues with reduced space & many foster homes on holiday as well. But I ask the reasons for rehoming & type of dog just in case we can point them in a more suitable direction (breed rescue etc) .

She says that he is a one year old German Shepherd cross Terrier, and that she needs to re- home him because she has a large garden which is not secure and he keeps running off. She also has 2 children, so its not convenient to keep going after him.

I advise that there is not a specific rescue that would take him in, and that again we would not be able to help until after the summer. She says that she has been on our website and can’t believe we are not helping her, and that WE are forcing her to have the dog put to sleep. Again I explain that we are all volunteers and cannot just make more available spaces , and that the time of year is also a factor, But that I can give her some website names to look at , but really it will mean just contacting as many rescues as possible to see if any have spaces

Her parting comment is that she “hopes she is able to find a rescue with more compassion then!”and hangs up!!

The number was blocked and we have no idea what she has happened to that poor dog.

“I am moving house”... ... an increasingly common reason for re-homing dogs

Again, whilst some calls are genuine emergencies, we are seeing increasing numbers where it is apparent that people are looking for a clean slate, and to offload excess baggage (which includes the dog) simply because it doesn’t fit their new lifestyle or they are not prepared to make compromises. Its fair to say that most dog lovers consider their pet to be part of the family , and when making any decision be it moving house, holidays, job changes etc, would take them into consideration at an early stage, and factor in how to accommodate and make things work. Sadly this is not the case for some people, and we are getting more and more calls from owners needing their dogs “gone today” because they are moving house next week. Unfortunately we are not able to operate like that , we cannot just place an unknown dog directly into a foster home (where there may also be resident dogs or children) , and it may take time to secure a kennel space .

A situation of their own making?

Caller - I need to rehome 2 possibly 3 dogs.

ECR - Why possibly 3?

Caller - well we have too many dogs - 5 now, and all their fur and dirt goes everywhere & gets too much inside the house

ECR - I seewhy get so many then?

Caller - Well we have mum, her son (now 2)

ECR - So you bred from her?

Caller - Well we rescued her from some travellers who had her tied up & paid £250 for her - an extortionate amount of money for a dog. But she was a bit mad, running in circles, chewing her tail & we thought it would help her by having some pups.

ECR - Seriously ?

Caller - Well we have 4 acres - so don't really have to walk them, just let them out in the field to run around. But my husband isn't well now, so some need to go.

ECR - Ok - What sort of dogs are they?

Caller - Border Collies.

ECR - I'm sorry we don't tend to take those in, as there are more specific breed rescues better tailored to their

particular needs & breed traits. I can give you some names if you want.

Caller - So you're not going to help?

ECR - As I said we don't tend to take that breed plus we are also very full at the moment.

Caller - So you're not going to help at all? You are all so busy advertising about how much you help any dog & what great work you do & now you won't help us!!

ECR - I'm sorry, do you realise that the majority of rescues are run by volunteers who do this freely - giving their own time and money to help? We have limited resources, and unfortunately people do still breed indiscriminately and make the problems worse.

Caller - I've helped, I've given my own money - £250 to help that dog!! You obviously aren't going to help us are you, goodbye!

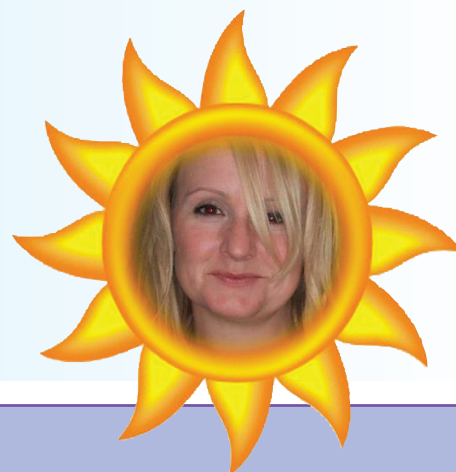
So there you have it - a small selection of the types of calls we receive each week. They often leave us with mixed emotions, and yes with time I guess you do become less likely to take things at face value, and look below the surface for the real reasons as to why people are actually rehoming their dog. They are also often frustrating especially when people are not prepared to help

themselves - what about securely fencing a small area of your garden before you get a dog? Or having taken on that commitment, allowing time to find a new home, rather than expecting the dog gone asap because you have emotionally distanced yourself from him.

In part, I think most people do not understand the reality of how a small rescue works. We aren't operating out of an office, sat there waiting to take calls with reams of information & empty kennels at our fingertips. We will always try to help where we can, but sometimes you are calling us on the school run, in the supermarket, the doctors etc We can't always take notes & call you back - we simply don't have the time & resources.

But one thing I do know.....we certainly could NOT do this without compassion!

Well done to Superstar Theresa for handling all these calls - you're a saint!



Dog Communication - 'cos Mutts need Manners!

Dog Communication - 'cos Mutts need Manners! are based at a lovely farm in Banstead, Surrey, and offer more specialist dog training for dogs that are nervous, or aggressive, lead reactive, or need help with socialisation.

Run jointly by dog trainers Laura McAuliffe and Penel Malby and their team of talented teaching dogs, Dog Communication work with dogs that need to learn appropriate skills from other dogs.

Dog Communication see a whole range of dogs at their training centre in Banstead, from young puppies who can learn manners from the adult teaching dogs, to older rescue dogs who may need help with socialising - all of whom can benefit from spending time with their well-mannered teaching dogs.

The services they offer include off-lead socialisation in appropriate groups, Lifeskills for Adolescent Dogs, Training and Control class for dogs that are reactive on lead, Socialisation Walks, One to One sessions, Recall workshops - and more.

All dogs are individually assessed at an initial consultation, and Dog Communication will tailor a programme specifically for you and your dog depending on their issues and requirements.

Dog Communication offer a reduced cost for dogs in foster care or rescue, and frequently work with dogs that are in the care of Epsom Canine Rescue helping them on their way to their forever home.



Please see

www.dogcommunication.co.uk

for further information.

WHY MUZZLE TRAIN?

CHECK OUT THE VIDEO



We muzzle train many of our dogs as a matter of course. But what may come as a surprise to many people, is that the reason we do so is actually for the safety and protection of OUR dogs.

Dogs are trained to wear a muzzle for a number of reasons:

- Some dogs just can't resist 'snacking' whilst outside the house, and see walks as a veritable smorgasbord of nibbles and treats to try on route. Whilst some choices can be frankly rather disgusting, others can cause upset stomachs or other health problems.

Muzzles can help this by making it difficult for you dog to pick up anything you do not directly feed them. And yes - you can still give treats through the side of a muzzle!

- Some dogs can get over-excited when playing with other dogs. They aren't being vicious or attacking, its just that their style of play can be a little over the top, or isn't well suited to their play companion. The sheer thrill of running around with another dog can sometimes mean excitable nips as they tear past each other, and particularly with thin-coated dogs, tiny 'grazes' can open up dramatically as they move. Often the dogs don't even notice at the time, as they are so engrossed in the game, and it is particularly common in Sighthounds with their style of play, thin coats and racey-chasey games.

By muzzle training your dog, you are giving him the opportunity to continue having fun and socialising (particularly important in young dogs), without having to worry about things getting out of hand and costly vet bills. Obviously it goes without saying that a muzzle does not give a dog free reign to 'run riot', and that you should always ensure that your dog displays good manners around others, and returns to you when it is time to end the game and go home, - Some dogs are not keen on having other dogs up close & in their face. This can be due to a number of reasons including lack of early socialisation, or because they have had poor experiences with other dogs in the past which can lead to fear-aggression. The majority of dogs just want to stay out of trouble and enjoy their walk in their own space. Unfortunately, we cannot control other owners and their dogs. Often the owners of "friendly dogs" are the worst culprits here, allowing their dogs to bound up to everyone and every dog, getting excitable and up close & personal because their dog "doesn't react" & "just wants to make friends". In dog terms this is very rude and shows poor social skills on the part of

the other dog in not reading your dogs body language that says "go away I just want to be left alone please". So that your dog is left with the only other canine option - growling & perhaps lunging.

It is a sad fact that if your dog is a spaniel or a lab, and they react like this it is considered acceptable. However, if your dog is a Staffie or other Bullbreed, because of the bad-press they get, people's reactions are different. So regardless of the circumstances, the Staffie/Bull-breed ends up getting the blame.

For this reason we will choose to muzzle train the majority of our Staffies/Bullbreeds - to highlight that WE are the responsible owners and to protect them from any recourse; but also to enable them to gradually rebuild their confidence around other dogs.

The key to success here is correct training. And like any new experience it needs to be taught in the right way, over a period of time and using positive reinforcement. Using these methods the muzzle just becomes part of 'walkies' and usually ends up generating the same level of anticipation as when a lead and harness are produced ready to go out.

An excellent video that shows how to successfully muzzle train your dog can be found here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FABgZTFvHo>

We will always discuss with you when you meet our dogs whether they are muzzle trained or still undergoing training, and explain the reasons why. And we will provide guidance and back-up on how to continue with the training.

It is important for the dog that you continue to use the muzzle on all walks, and not just "dip in and out", otherwise the dog will become confused and unsettled. We recommended Baskerville or Baskerville Ultra muzzles

As always our long-term goal is Happy, Healthy Dogs!!



Available via the ECR online shop





LIFE IS GREAT!



The name is MOO – Marley Moo – and I am a 3 year old Staffie, as tough as nails but also as gentle as a lamb. I am the senior security officer at SmartCare head office in Surrey where



A lapdog at heart

my forever parents work. That is my life now but like many others of my breed, I have a past life too. I don't like dwelling on the bad things but suffice to say that my start in life wasn't the best and not a happy one. Then Nikki of Epsom Canine Rescue came to rescue me. During my stay of a little more than year at ECR, I met many of Nikki's friends who gave me faith in the human race again with their kindness. Taking me for walks,

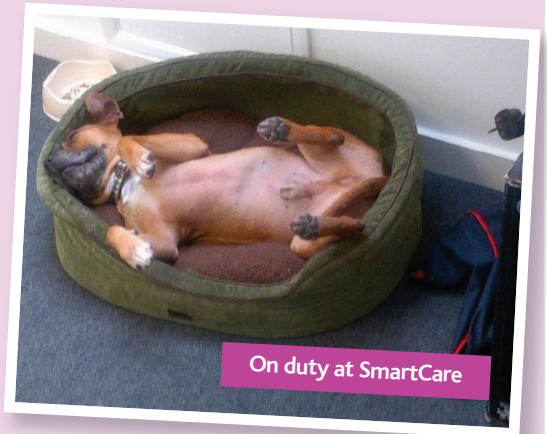
showing me love and showering me with affection. I even became their figurehead and they used my lovely smile in their publicity photos. I made good friends there with two other staffies, Ruby and Fleur and I didn't think things could get much better. Until one day when my prospective forever family came to visit me.

I heard via the grapevine that they had just lost their beloved black staffie, Bandit, so I was on my very best behaviour and really did my best to impress them with my retrieving skills. They seemed to be impressed and I thought it would be a good idea to let them know how I felt so when they were preparing to leave, I jumped onto the front seat as soon as the car door was opened. When Nikki called me out of the car she assured me that she would take me to visit them soon which made me feel a little better.

About 2 weeks later, Nikki took me to visit my forever dad in Westfield and the 3 of us went for a lovely long walk and I had a warm fuzzy feeling that all was well. My new forever family got the stamp of approval and on Saturday 22nd December Nikki took me to my new forever home forever.

Well, being a staffie, I wanted to put my stamp of authority down. As soon as Nikki had left, I leapt from settee to settee then onto the coffee table and

finally managed to get onto the dining room table, to my forever parents' total disbelief. My forever dad took control and firmly but kindly, sat me



On duty at SmartCare

on the floor and read me the riot act. I got the message straight away and haven't tried that again.

On the day I arrived I was showered with love and affection and full on attention but as everyone knows, all good things come to an end and soon it was bed time for my forever family. I must say my nose was a bit out of joint when I wasn't invited up to share the double bed but instead, found myself in the kitchen on a doggy bed. I was showered with kisses and goodnights and then, to my despair, they closed the "baby" gate to ensure that I stayed put! Well, I was going to have none of this and kept everyone awake with my howling until my forever dad came downstairs to console me and then settled down on the settee in the lounge. I could



Waiting in the Marley Van

sense he was close by and I hadn't lost him so I went to sleep. These days I am very secure and although the baby gate is still there, I know that this is my place at bedtime.

From the word go I was also appointed security manager at SmartCare and accompany my forever parents to work every day to ensure that all the human beings there are on their best behaviour. This job has a lot of perks ie cuddles, treats, kisses, tummy rubs and regular walks and retrieving in the Weybridge park.

Before you all think that life is a bed of roses, there are still hardships in my life. After I had been at my forever home for 2 or 3 weeks, my forever dad got it into his head that I needed a visit to the vet, a decision which was made because of my continually scooting and scratching. The message had not got through to him that vets are not part of my agenda, particularly strange vets. On that fateful visit, I decided to share my displeasure and knowing how nimble my forever dad was, I wanted to catch them both by surprise. My plan worked a treat! Before they could say Jack Robinson, I had kicked the vet out of the way, knocked the examination table over and was waiting at the door to go home. Not surprisingly, my dad took control of the situation and put me on the table and I was forced to resign myself to my fate. I have now got used to the vet and can tolerate our visits.

I do also have to tell you about my other life on the rivers and

waterways. Once the warmer weather arrived, we all piled into the Mooley van (yes, a vehicle my family bought especially for me!) and to my great surprise we arrived at Shepperton where there are hundreds of boats. I was a bit nervous and afraid that maybe they would leave me there but I needn't have been worried because after a long walk down the pontoon, we arrived at a narrowboat and I was invited on board and unceremoniously fitted with a hi-viz life jacket. So much for me being a covert security officer!!! It was quite an experience, cruising down the Thames, barking at the geese, cranes, ducks and swans but fortunately no cats. I have been promoted to First Mate on the narrowboat Selkie and really look forward to our trips up and down the rivers Thames and the Wey. That's as far as my happy story goes. I am becoming more secure by the day. Paws crossed that nothing ever happens to burst my happy bubble. With thanks to everyone at ECR who do such an incredible job in finding forever homes for the likes of me.



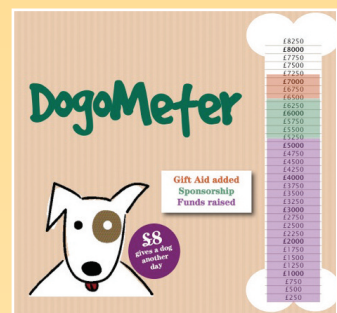
On board Selkie

GOLDEN PAW AWARD



for Lifetime Rescue Achievement

We would like to draw people's attention to the dedication of Jan & John Nunney who, over the last few years, have raised a massive £7110 for the Rescue.



www.facebook.com/JanGoodies

Jan is a real creative person, making jams, pickles, cordials, the amazing Felties and lately leads, harnesses & collars – is there no end to her talents! Johnny is our Mr Designer and has designed and organised our newsletters, promos, gazebo, badges and his latest great achievement the 'Rescues Rock' brand which is selling as quick as Jan's Rock Cakes!!

A MASSIVE thanks to you both from all at Epsom Canine Rescue – **You Nunneys Rock!**

Rescues Rock!

www.facebook.com/rescues.rock.1



THE STORY OF LOLA

In January 2012, our old Staffy cross Biff passed away just weeks before his 13th birthday. It was a very sad time for all.

We knew we would get another dog, but thought it best to wait six months or so, to give us freedom to go away with no ties, and also the thought of getting another dog too soon would maybe have been disrespectful to Biff's memory. However, one week later we all realised how empty, quiet and lonely the house seemed without a dog. Fate then played its hand.

We tried a few rescue sites with no luck, then a friend of mine asked whether we had tried ECR. To be honest, I had never heard of it (being a Berkshire boy born and bred). So, we looked on the website, and the very first thing we saw was 'Cassie's puppies'. We looked, and instantly fell in love with Casey as she was then called, a gorgeous SBT puppy. Frantic emails, form completions and a house visit followed and we were rewarded with the go ahead and contact details for her foster home, Gemma.

Gemma had fallen in love with Casey, and used all her persuasive powers on me to make me wait until the weekend to go and pick her up, and not the next day.



A family discussion then came up with a short list of names, and Lola was decided upon.

We went to pick Lola up on the Saturday. We only went 18 days without a dog!

It was love at first sight when we saw Lola, and she took an instant like to us all, especially, critically, to our girls Abby and



Holly who were five and four at the time. After a debriefing, we were on our way home with our new puppy.

As soon as we were home, it was evident what a fantastic job Gemma had done with Lola's initial training, as she knew to go into the garden, and had already mastered the basic commands...and she was only 12 weeks old.

Lola was enrolled into puppy socialisation classes with Sandra at dogsandownersguidanceschool.co.uk then into basic training once that had been completed. Lola did well under pressure, and I was very proud when she joint won the musical 'sit' then was outright winner of musical 'down'. Lola was a very quick learner, and to this day, has always shown a good sense of intelligence.

When Lola was spayed, she accepted her buster collar as a regular feature, and didn't once try and get it off. The bin was

knocked over a few times though when she came running back in from the garden! The strange thing is, Lola had two normal ears before her op, but since the collar



has been removed, her right ear is permanently stuck up. She is now unique in that she has odd ears.

Lola loves to go out. We have taken her to various fund raisers where she has met plenty of other dogs, including a brother and sister of hers. Lola was lucky enough to win 1st prize in 'best rescue dog' at ECR's Christmas fundraiser. Allegations of bias judging may not be completely unfounded!

Lola is a very happy girl, and very well behaved. She adores children. Lola greets every human out walking with a wag of her tail, and every other dog as a potential play mate. In fact, Lola seems to take it as a personal insult if a human walks past without giving her a fuss, or she is ignored by another dog. Lola is often told her beautiful and sweet she is by passers by.

Lola was taken into my youngest daughter's school for pet day, where she was my daughters 'show and tell'. She was very well behaved, a great ambassador for the breed, and enjoyed lying on her back for tummy rubs from the whole class.

Lola has certainly brought happiness back into our lives, and the house is no longer empty, quiet or lonely. It is a shame she never met Biff, as Biff would have loved her, as he loved puppies and playful dogs. I am sure though, if he is looking down on us, he would approve and not at all feel dishonoured that he had been replaced so quickly.





Time to Unpack

...Settling your new Dog

Moving to a new home is a hugely stressful time for any dog, so it is important that new owners have realistic expectations. You will need to be patient, and prepared to give your new dog time to unwind, settle and unpack, and most of all enjoy having your new companion around.

No dog will settle within a few hours/days of bringing it home, and a rescue dog is no different in that respect. Many of these dogs have been through so much, that they need time and patience to settle. They may initially be scared or confused by yet another move - will it be permanent?. There may be friendships to forge & hierarchies to establish if there are resident dogs. There may be relief that they are finally out of kennels & on a comfy sofa.

The first few weeks may well be a roller-coaster: Periods of uncertainty in the new home, followed by a testing period once they become more confident and start to push the boundaries, until with love, consistency and training things begin to settle down. This may take a few days or it may take a few months - each dog is different and you need to be prepared for that.

A good rescue centre will always provide you with as much background information as then can, however in some circumstances this may well be limited if for example the dog came in as a stray. You need to be flexible, and may need to adapt your current commitments and family's routine to allow you to dedicate sufficient time to integrating and settling your new dog. Owning a well rounded, well socialised, well trained dog who is a pleasure to walk and take out and about involves investing time and commitment. An under exercised and under stimulated dog may well resort to attention seeking or destructive behavior. A tired dog will be an easier dog, and that will include mental as well as physical exhaustion!

We will always seek to identify and advise on problems we are aware of, but sometimes they will only be apparent when you bring the dog home. In those cases we will always look to work with you to resolve any issues, possibly by involving our behaviorist to offer structured guidance and advice.

Consistency is one of the most important things that you can give

your new dog - decide what is acceptable behavior and routine in your home and start as you mean to go on i.e if you do not want dogs sleeping with you then do not allow them to do so & hope to change things later! It may mean some sleepless nights, but setting the ground rules from day one is easier and less confusing for your dog.

It is also important to keep things as calm as possible for the first few weeks, whilst maintaining your usual routine as much as possible. Every dog is different, but too many visitors or certain environments may overwhelm your new dog, Dogs can exhibit stress in many different ways including hyperactivity, panting & fear. So care should be taken to monitor their reaction, introduce new activities and people gradually, be patient, calm & reassuring and use positive reinforcement at all times. You can also go for a walk to burn off energy or use a crate to give the dog some "down" time.

It is important to realise that these initial behaviours stem from the dog's insecurity. Give them time to learn about their new environment and take it slowly.....most of all don't lose heart and give up, the rewards will be worth it. Rome wasn't built in a day!



The fab Sandiford family are all ready for the lucky Mr Wilbur!

An interview

with Mr Handsome, also known as Potter.

Interviewer: Thank you so much for taking time out to do this interview. Before we start, do you prefer being called Potter or Mr Handsome?

Potter: Mr Handsome is good, but most people call me His Royal Handsomeness (HRH)

I: ok, so, His Royal Handsomeness, tell us a little about yourself?

HRH: well, I'm handsome, obviously, I'm around 2 years old... I think. I'm a lovely golden tan colour with matching eyes! I love to play and chew everything and anything and I love love love cuddles and kisses.... Oh, I'm also a Tripawd.

I: what's a tripawd?

HRH: it means I'm on 3 legs, like a tripod (stands up to show me his balance)

I: oh dear, when and how did that happen?

HRH: well, I had a very sore leg about 8 months ago and couldn't run and play as much as I wanted to. My foster mum and dad were very worried about me and took me on lots and lots of trips to the vets and then after last Christmas they found this horrible lump in my shoulder. They had to chop my leg off to save my awesome life! I had this horrible thing called bone cancer.

I: and how are you feeling now?

HRH: much better but because I have so much handsomeness in me, it's hard to carry all that around and my one front leg gets very tired

and achy so I have to rest lots. I go swimming every week, I don't like getting my beautiful fur wet but my mum and dad say it helps build up my muscles without hurting my joints. I'm going to be even more buff, like Jean Claude Van Damme!

I: do you get a lot of attention when out and about?

HRH: of course, my loyal subjects love me (keeps nodding and ponders further) people always stop to say how handsome I am, it's stating the obvious but I do love my fans!

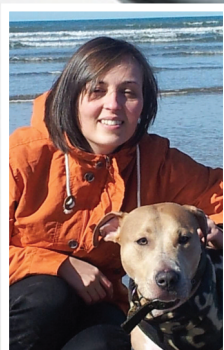
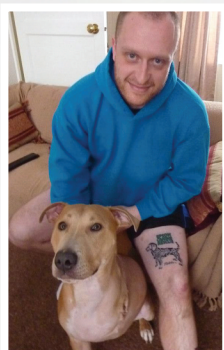
I: what do you like to do for fun?

HRH: destroy things (nods and looks very pleased with himself). I love to chew and my favourite thing to do is unravel tug toys. I am super duper fast at unravelling them... I should be in the Guinness book of world records!!

I also love to go to Devon where I can play on the beach before chilling out and falling asleep in front of a log fire

I: so, before we finish, is there anything you'd like to tell the readers and your fans?

HRH: don't buy, adopt! Remember there are many dogs out there all looking for their forever homes. Adopting a dog won't change the world, but it will change the world for one dog.



The inkredible (tattoo) Wayne & Nina - Mr Handsome's foster Mum & Dad who made Mr P's short life as full and fun as possible.

Sadly the cancer returned and Potter passed away on Friday 21st June 2013. Potter was a truly special dog; he was always happy, always smiling and always causing mischief, even in his last moments. He was our best buddy and is missed each day; run free at Rainbow Bridge, until we meet again.



HoneyBun
A really affectionate crossbreed girl who loves people, a good play but needs to be an only dog
Female | 5 years | Med/Large



Pele
An affectionate little lad who needs someone who will understand his initial nervousness.
Male | 2 years | Small



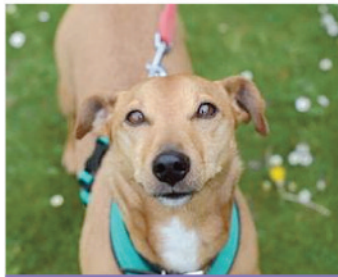
Jake
We are looking for an experienced home without other dogs for this little Parsons Terrier
Male | 2 years | Small/Medium



Frank
is a labrador cross miniature poodle who needs extra training in a home with older children & no cats.
Male | 3yrs | Medium



Beau Pup
needs help with his toilet training & a family who will commit to ongoing training & socialisation.
Male | 6 months | poss. Large



Rooney
a sweet smooth coated terrier boy who is sadly being rehomed due to illness. He would suit an older family
Male | 7/8 years | Small



Scout
a very friendly & inquisitive little man, who takes everything in his stride and is keen to say hello
Male | 1 years | Small



LuckyStanley
really is a delightful little man, who just wants to know he is finally loved
Male | 4 years | Medium



Jerry
Very friendly small Yorkie cross looking for a loving & patient home who can help develop his socialising skills
Male | 2½ years | Small



Ruby
A real friendly, happy staffie girl, you cannot help to fall in love at first sight!!!
Female | 5 years | Medium



Gus & Nell
Two sweet JRT sisters, who are looking for a home together with lots of fuss & cuddles
Male | 4 years | Small



Cassie
She just wants to be kissed & cuddled and loves to play, but needs to live as an only dog.
Female | 3 years | Medium



Sally
A delightful, easy little girl, a good all rounder who would love a new family to call her own
Female | 8 years | Small



Bella
She is not very confident around other dogs, so would be better living as an only dog,
Female | 11 months | Small



Indie
likes to be up on your lap, giving you a good ear washing, she is a real people magnet
Female | 11 months | Small

CAN YOU HELP?



Where appropriate, all dogs under our care are neutered, vaccinated & micro-chipped prior to rehoming. For more information & to complete our re-homing questionnaire www.epsomcaninerescue.co.uk or call 01883-334515 or 07941-358615 for Nikki or Theresa.



With around 8 million dogs in the UK, dog food and treats are big business.



Are your Dog Treats as good as you think?

There are masses to choose from, with more coming onto the market each month, and huge marketing budgets behind the big well-known brands.

Unfortunately this also means that behind the hype, many treats are not quite what they seem, and you can unwittingly find yourself feeding your dog the canine equivalent of Junk Food. So you need to look beyond the brand, to read the labels and consider what exactly you are putting into your pet.

As with people, too much of a bad thing can lead to obesity, hyper-activity, illness, dental problems, food intolerances, lower life expectancy and expensive vet bills. Many popular brands of pet treat comprise little more than cheap fillers, flavourings & colouring, with a few vitamins sprinkled on top so they can shout about it in the adverts. At best these just fill your dog up (particularly if they are poor eaters), and deprive them of the sustenance and nutrients their proper food should provide. At worst they can cause intolerance, health and behavioural problems.

When choosing what treats to give your dog, it is therefore important to take the following into consideration:-

Why are you giving treats?

Everyone likes to spoil their dog just to remind them how special they are!

And whilst this is okay sometimes, on the whole, it is better to subscribe to the 80-20 rule. This means that 20% of the time it's fine to 'just treat', but for the remaining 80%, you should make your dog work for the treat, or there should be a good reason for giving it.

This is important, as dogs respond best to reward based training. So if you continually give treats ad lib, then you will have nothing left in your arsenal to motivate them, use for training or to keep them occupied when you need to.

How much are you giving

It is important from both a health point of view and a motivational one, to consider how many treats you give your dog, and you should always consider treats as part of your dog's overall daily food allowance.

If you are doing a lot of training, and using a lot of treats, then you should be reducing the amount of food that you give your dog at mealtimes, as well as making sure that you choose the healthiest treats possible. (see below). Similarly if you like to leave your dog with filled activity toys when you go out, this needs to be taken into account too.

The type & temperament of your dog

Many owners (and our own experience) suggest that some treats can have a negative effect on a dog's behaviour by making them hyperactive. This is often seen in treats made using lots of flavourings & colourings, and is very similar to the effects of additives that have been reported in children.

This includes many of the best known, popular & heavily marketed brands of treats and unfortunately means that most treats you find in a supermarket, are likely to fall into this category.

These behaviours are often particularly apparent in breeds such as terriers where they seem to magnify existing hyperactive or obsessive traits. It's also worth noting that these effects have

also been seen in dogs fed on highly coloured dog foods.

What sort of treats are you giving.

The best treat to give your dog is actually just to use some of their normal food, or another good quality dried food.

Some highly food motivated dogs will 'work' for anything, and this is fantastic as you know they are getting a balanced, nutritious treat. This should also be the first point of call for filling treat balls, Kongs etc, perhaps with a few smellier or more desirable additives to pique their interest.

However we realise that not all dogs are motivated by this, so you will need to consider other alternatives.

We would always advocate feeding more natural treats and avoiding highly processed & coloured treats for the reasons stated above. Fortunately more and more are becoming available, but you may need to look more carefully for them, as a lot don't advertise as widely (or have the same budgets)

Treats we recommend include:

- Fish4Dogs - they are all natural, high in beneficial fish oils, & come in a variety of sizes.
- Rawhide braids & chews - Please ensure you choose an appropriate size for your dog, and avoid cheap versions (they are often made of small pieces pressed together). Monitor your dog, particularly when they get near the end and avoid the thin pencil type rawhides at all costs, as they present a severe choking hazard.
- Raw Marrow Bones - cooked bones should never be given as they are liable to splinter.
- Homemade Tuna cake (this can be frozen and used when needed as a high value treat)
- Dried liver pieces or other dried meats (there are increasingly more types available)
- Cooked chicken
- Cubed cheese
- Stagbars



Sew Workshops

1 to 1
or groups
upto 4

- Basic sewing
- Curtains
- Dress making
- Exploring your Sewing Machine
- Bunting
- Patchwork
- Toy making

Every penny helps
Rescue
Dogs

Minimum donation
£25 per hr 1to1
£10 per hr groups

Machines & Patterns available or
bring your own. Samples for you to keep!

ASHTHEAD AREA (2 miles from M25 J9)

Call Eve 01372 278131



STAGbars

Chewing releases, feel-good chemicals from the brain and keeps dogs happy, busy and using up energy. Stagbars last longer than any other dog chew on the market – longer than rawhide chews or compacted vegetable starch chews. They wear down slowly with the grinding action of the dog's teeth and saliva, into tasty morsels. Eventually, the dry marrow is exposed as a lovely treat when the outside has been worn away. They are suitable for puppies who are teething.

Stagbars don't contain nylon like some long lasting chews. They are not an 'empty' chew like rawhide and contain important minerals.

They clean the dog's teeth, rather than bung them up and they're great for dogs with sensitive tummies. Even dogs who are losing weight can enjoy Stagbars because they only contain a tiny amount of fat. Naturally, they don't contain additives or preservatives.

Stagbars are clean dog chews, leaving no stain or mess on the carpet and they are also very low in odour – some say they have a very faint smell of fresh soil. They are effectively 'raw' and so retain all their goodness and safety.

The raw material used to make Stagbars is sourced from naturally shed deer antler.

4 SIZES AVAILABLE

Small £3.99

Medium £5.99

Large £8.99

XL £10.99

Plus Postage & Packing £2.00



See our online shop

www.epsomcaninerescue.co.uk/index.php/ecr-shop

When Rosie came to live with me and my Patterdale Terrier, Barney, I was told that she hadn't seen much of life. That was all about to change!

We live on the outskirts of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire surrounded by footpaths and fields so plenty of walks and new friends for Rosie but she has also become a bit of an adventurer too. Last year holidays in Cornwall, Kent, a long weekend on the Pennine Way at Crowden and a lovely weekend walking in Gloucestershire.

But this wasn't enough for Rosie, she needed a real adventure so back in May we packed up the camper van and headed North. The first night we stayed just over the border in Moffat then we carried on North past Loch Lomond, through Fort William to Kyle of Lochalsh and over the Skye Bridge.

The first campsite on Skye was on the shore of Loch Greshornish with a fantastic 1.5 mile walk along the beach. The next day we went to Dunvegan where we found a fantastic coral beach which, in the sunshine, felt like a tropical paradise! It was definitely a doggy paradise.

We went for a drive around Skye the next day to look for another campsite and settled on Glenbrittle (after a minor detour to the Talisker Distillery!). Here we had a huge beach to ourselves and Rosie was able to run around on a long lead to her heart's content and she did fantastically well when we practised her recall. We also tried a bit of mountaineering and found a lovely waterfall.

The next part of the adventure was a bit of island hopping so we went to Uig on Skye and took the ferry to Tarbert on Harris. CAL MAC ferries are very dog friendly and we were allowed in one of the lounges for this crossing. We found a campsite next to a beach on the west coast of Harris where strangely, both Rosie and Barney went crazy digging holes in the sand. I never did find out what they were digging for.

That night the wind was relentless and I woke several times thinking we were going to blow over! The dogs weren't bothered at all.

In the morning we drove around Harris, finding some beautiful places to explore on the way, then headed up to an area of Lewis which is also called Uig. Here we stayed for a couple of nights on a campsite on the most fabulous

beach I have ever seen. In the day the weather was lovely but at night the temperature really dropped. I later found out that they had snow that night on the main land. That was definitely a two dog night in a campervan with no heating.

We went to the Butt of Lewis and had a walk by the lighthouse then had a wander around Stornaway while we waited for the ferry to Ullapool. This time we had a little cordoned off dog area and the crossing was a bit longer but Barney and Rosie took it all within their stride. We had a quiet night in Ullapool then headed North again to Scourie. Here we had a great walk out to Scourie More where we could see the Hebrides as well as the Point of Stoer and Handa Island. The next day we went to Durness but stopped on route to walk to Sandwood Bay (4.5 miles each way). I can't

running so we took the ferry (a little boat with an outboard motor) then the bus (a beat up old LDV minibus) and went to the lighthouse there. The weather was fantastic all day and we were treated a helicopter display by the lighthouse maintenance crew! Back in Durness that night Rosie had another run around on the beach and decided that Barney was being boring so she kept shoulder barging him (a typical Terrier game).

It was now, unfortunately, time to start thinking about going home. We went along the North coast, did the usual photo call in John O'Groats then turned south towards Inverness. We stayed for just one night at Rosemarkie on the banks of the Moray Firth (via another ferry at Cromarty). Here is another fantastic beach where, the last time I stayed, there were dolphins and porpoises swimming. No such luck this time, Rosie must have scared them off!

To split the journey home up we stayed the next two nights at another of my favourite places, Beadnell Bay in Northumberland. You've guessed it, another truly fantastic, dog friendly beach which stretches all the way to Seahouses.

Finally, on a drizzly Saturday morning, we drove back to Aylesbury at the end of a fantastic adventure. I couldn't want for better companions than my lovely Barney and Rosie.

PS, When Rosie arrived she could not go in the car without being sick. This holiday 3050 km and she was not sick at all, not even at sea!

THE ADVENTURES OF ROSIE

believe that two little dogs can walk 4 1/2 miles, run around on a beach like lunatics for half an hour and still have the energy to walk back but they did. On the way back it poured down with rain. There was no shelter to be had so we just carried on and got soaked but it was a fantastic walk all the same. Despite the fact that it was still broad daylight until gone 11 at night, we all slept very well that night on Sango Sands at Durness.

I have wanted to go to Cape Wrath for years and, finally, was up there when the ferry was





JAKE



CASSIE



PELE

SPONSOR!

As a small rescue, sometimes we are approached to take dogs that may have been turned down by the bigger main stream rescue centres as they are considered difficult to rehome and need some form of rehabilitation. With support and guidance from Sandra our resident trainer and behaviourist www.dogsandownersguidanceschool.co.uk we try to offer these dogs a second chance... In some cases, they have suffered some form of mistreatment or trauma or perhaps just simply neglected, and therefore find it difficult to adjust to life in a normal home environment, needing more time to regain their trust in humans and become more socially adept. Sadly, sometimes they have just been overlooked due to their breed, age, or lack of 'cute appeal' and have not got past that first hurdle and been given the chance to win anyone over with their personalities. If you are unable to have a dog of your own, due to work, housing or social commitments, could you help by sponsoring one of these dogs ensuring that they receive regular toys, and treats that will stimulate them and make their daily lives a little more interesting whilst they continue to look for their forever home....

If you are interested in sponsoring one of our dogs please visit our website for more information.



HONEY



SALLY



RUBY

Time for a T?



RESCUES ROCK was started recently by ECR volunteers John & Jan as a concept for rescues to raise their profile and fundraise by selling bespoke T shirts which are not only fun to wear but also help raise awareness for rescue dogs. We are offering something different to the oversized baggy novelty T shirt. The idea is that people can buy more than one product and wear them as day wear or when out walking their rescues. When we launched Rescue Rocks we realised people wanted more colour options and we have been selling them in various sizes in ladies cut and also regular unisex style. Some supporters have ordered 3 or 4!

At the moment you can buy them via the rescues involved but we are receiving orders for generic T-shirts so keep an eye out and we will announce the arrival of these T's on the Facebook page. Details of the rescues that have stock are also available via the facebook page.

www.facebook.com/rescues.rock.1



Thank-You...

This year the list is far too long to mention everyone, with soooo many people giving either their time / donations / food / toys / foster / events etc. However, special thanks to the main team, Theresa White and family, Steve Taylor, Audrey Royal, Jan and John (Mankini) Nunney, Nina and Wayne Smith, Maria Johnson and Kevin Green, Penel Malby, Eve Olley, Tim Sullivan, new helpers Tracey Guy, Mandy Line & Jackie Anderson and a big thank you to Sarah Hickson and Paula Kelly for organising the 80's Night which was a great success!

Heartfelt thanks also to Sandra Pearson our behaviourist/trainer (www.dogandownersguidanceschool.co.uk) who is always on hand to offer advice and guidance for our rescue dogs, often juggling work and her own life to help us to help them. I know a lot of our dogs would love to give you a MASSIVE THANK YOU LICK!!!! YOU are a STAR!!

I know every year I say it, but without everyone's help, we would not be able to continue, so huge thanks to all the many un-named!!

Nikki x

If you would like to sponsor /advertise in our future newsletters please contact nikki@epsomcaninerescue.co.uk