

FOR PETS

The magazine for Blue Cross supporters

Autumn 2022



Best friends

Rescued pony now
loves story time



Pets change lives
We change theirs

Struggling to cope with the loss of your pet?

Our Pet Bereavement Support Service is here to help



Pets change lives
We change theirs

Call 0800 096 6606 or webchat at bluecross.org.uk/about-pbss (8.30am-8.30pm every day)

or email us any time at pbssmail@bluecross.org.uk

Find out more about this unique and important service at: bluecross.org.uk/pet-bereavement-support

bluecross.org.uk

Blue Cross is a charity registered in England and Wales (224392) and in Scotland (SC040154).



COVER STORY
08 Stan loves story time
 Once-neglected pony now girl's best friend

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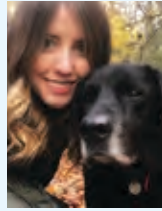
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WELCOME

Scenes of people clutching their beloved pets as they flee the war in Ukraine have been devastating to watch. And for Blue Cross, which has helped the pets of conflict throughout its 125-year history, it was again time to step in. In this issue, you'll read about how we're supporting charities abroad to help animals displaced by the Russian invasion. At home, we're also caring for the pets of refugees arriving in the UK, as well as many other animals with nowhere left to turn as the cost of living crisis takes its grip on the nation. Not that we ever need reminding, but the heroic pets through the ages we are celebrating on pages four to seven are shining examples of why our charity continues to exist.

Aimee Brannen, Editor

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HERO PETS

through the ages

We take a look back at some of the remarkable animals awarded the Blue Cross Medal during our charity's history...

We know that every pet has the power to change a life, but some animals display extraordinary feats of heroism and bravery that nobody could expect.

And, as Blue Cross celebrates 125 years of helping pets, we've delved into the archives to remember some of the remarkable four-legged friends that have done just that over the course of our rich history.

OUTSTANDING

Each year, our charity awards outstanding pets the Blue Cross

Medal, which, for animals, dates back as far as 1940, when a dog named La Cloche was honoured for saving a marine from drowning.

Since then, it has gone on to pay homage to many more miracle pets, including those who have saved children's and adult's lives in terrifying ordeals involving fires, water, snow and even quicksand.

From hero pets of the Blitz to modern-day assistance animals, here are just some of those that Blue Cross is remembering in this milestone anniversary year.

Nominate your hero pet at bluecross.org.uk/blue-cross-medal



LA CLOCHE

Medal winner 1940

This hero hound saved the life of a marine who was thrown into the sea when his ship was torpedoed by a German submarine.

Our annual report from this year detailed the incredible rescue, saying: "He [the marine] could not swim. His dog, left on board, dived into the sea, swam to his master and supported him for a considerable time in the water until the man was hauled out unconscious, and so saved.

"The dog sheered off the boat and could not be pulled out of the sea owing to the swell, it was thought that he was lost, but managed to find a log of wood on which he clambered and was later found riding the seas waiting patiently for his own rescue."

We took care of amazing La Cloche and returned him to his owner after the quarantine period.



JULIANA

Medal winner 1941

This plucky great dane was awarded the Blue Cross Medal not once, but twice. Her first act of heroism was to miraculously extinguish an incendiary bomb that had fallen through the roof of her home during the Blitz.

Three years later, the special dog alerted customers to a fire ripping through her owner's shop. Her painting, shown here, was discovered during a house clearance at a property in Bristol many years later.



JIM

Medal winner 1942

Many dogs have won accolades for heroic rescues, but cat Jim proved in 1942 that moggies are just as good at keeping a watchful eye over their beloved families.

At 19 years old, the miraculous moggy raced upstairs to wake his owners, Mr and Mrs Coffey, when a fire broke out in their Malden home, even though he could easily have escaped the smoke alone.



RUFF

Medal winner 1944

When a bomb wrecked Ruff's family home, the Airedale terrier-sheepdog cross instinctively knew what he needed to do.

With his owner and her 10-month-old son trapped beneath the rubble, he dug through the debris until he found the baby, gripping his clothes to gently drag him out to safety.

Ruff then alerted the rescue team to his owner, who was also rescued unharmed, as well as fellow family pet, a cat called Ginger.

Graham Sclater, the little boy (pictured), became inseparable from Ruff, who lived until he was 11.



JAKE

Medal winner 2007

Serving as a Metropolitan Police explosives dog, springer spaniel Jake showed remarkable bravery during the 7 July 2005 terrorist attack on London's transport network which killed 52 people and injured more than 700.

He cleared the route for paramedics to reach the wounded at the scene of the Tavistock Square bus bombing and then walked along the Tube tunnel at King's Cross, allowing people to access medical treatment.

Jake's owner, PC Crawford, said at the time: "Jake is a hardworking dog who performed brilliantly on the day of the bombings. Jake will wear his medal with pride."

Actress Felicity Kendal (pictured) bestowed Jake with his honour.



DAISY

Medal winner 2014

Part of a revolutionary canine team, Labrador Daisy was one of the first Medical Detection Dogs to be trained to sniff out cancer.

A pioneer in detecting the disease in breath and urine, she was awarded the First World War centenary edition of the medal after saving hundreds of lives, including that of her owner, Dr Claire Guest.

Daisy sadly died in 2018, aged 13, having dedicated her life to the cause, but her legacy lives on today.



BONNIE

Medal winner 2015

Guardian angel Bonnie, a staffie-whippet cross, helped terminally ill children and their families through their last moments and taught a suicidal man to love and live again.

Despite having a tough start to life herself, the inspirational rescue dog, who has since passed away, worked tirelessly to help hundreds of people in her community in Grimsby, Lincolnshire.

Bonnie had already had seven homes before being taken in by Vicky Burn and, with her love, grew in confidence. After just six months, she passed the test to become a Pets as Therapy dog.



ROMEO

Medal winner 2016

Super staffie Romeo is not only a qualified Pets as Therapy dog, visiting stroke patients or brightening the day for the residents of a local care home, he is also a regular canine blood donor for the Royal Veterinary College.

And as if bringing happiness to people and saving fellow dogs' lives wasn't enough, he also joins his owner Steph Hartley on runs to help raise funds for charity.



CARROTS

Medal winner 2020

Despite losing both eyes as a kitten, cat Carrots has dedicated his life to bringing comfort to sick patients and their families at a Bradford hospice.

Owner Katie Lloyd, who Carrots also supported through cancer treatment, says: "He has been there for everyone at the Marie Curie Hospice in their hour of need and is special to so many people.

"He loves visiting patients and settles beside them so that they can stroke him and listen to him purr. He touches the hearts of everyone he meets and has a great sense of love and responsibility."

Once-neglected pony now girl's **BEST FRIEND**

Rescue cob Stan is thriving in his new home after rehabilitation at Blue Cross...

Staring and helpless, abandoned foal Stan was found collapsed and clinging to life.

Vets said the neglected cob, whose coat was so thickly matted that he looked like a sheep rather than a pony, was likely just one day away from death.

When he arrived at our Rolleston centre in Nottinghamshire, the team could not believe the sorry state the poor boy was in – and immediately swung into action to help him.

Verity Anderton-Johnson, Horse Rehoming Coordinator, says: "When we first saw Stan, he looked more like a sheep than a pony due to how much hair he had.

"His coat was all matted, full of mud and faeces – so the best thing to do was to clip the coat fully off as the

mats were too big to brush out. After clipping him, we realised how poor his condition was."

We made sure Stan got the food and medication he needed to gain strength. And, while his fragile body mended, we also set about healing his mental scars – teaching him that humans could be kind.

HEALING

Verity continues: "Stan's training came on quickly and he started to develop a lovely calm character for a youngster."

Once he was well and confident enough, we found Stan a home where we knew he would be loved and could continue his rehabilitation.

He now lives in a Cheshire paddock with fellow Blue Cross rescue pony, Sprout, and enjoys







BEFORE



New owner Laura is amazed at Stan's transformation



“

When we first saw Stan, he looked more like a sheep than a pony due to how much hair he had

”



Stan grazes in the paddock with friend Sprout



twice-daily visits from his best friend, 11-year-old Evie.

Since her parents, Laura and Paul Davey, rehomed Stan a year ago, the pair have developed a special bond and Evie can often be found reading books to the kind-natured pony.

"Stan just adores Evie and as soon as he hears the car he comes running to the gate," says Laura.

"He follows her everywhere and has to be involved with anything she's doing. He particularly loves story time and hearing about her day.

"In the words of Evie, a Stan cuddle makes everything better and all her worries just disappear."

Laura continues: "Stan likes Evie the best – she can do more with him than we can. When you think about it, it's probably because she's a child and a child won't have done anything bad to him in his past."

SECRETS

Evie says: "I can tell Stan anything, I can tell him all my secrets. He's my best friend.

"When Mummy saw him, we knew he needed a home as he had been in such a bad condition, and we thought he would be a good friend for Sprout. As soon as Sprout saw him, they were nuzzling each other."

Stan, who is now two, loves to be brushed by Evie, who says her pony pal "likes lots of attention."

Laura, who has another two Blue Cross rescue horses, Nelson and Bruno, is amazed by the transformation in Stan, who was shutdown and nervous when he first arrived with her.

"He's so much more confident and will start the play now, whereas it was always Sprout before," she says.

Verity adds: "Seeing how much Stan has come on since being at Blue Cross and now in his dream home is wonderful. We couldn't have wished for a more perfect home for him."





BEFORE



'DINOSAUR' CAT on the mend

Poor Brian was in a terrible state after roaming the streets for months on end...

With huge, matted clumps of fur along his spine that resembled dinosaur scales, homeless cat Brian must have been so uncomfortable.

The 14-year-old is thought to have been wandering the streets for at least seven months before finding himself at a local vet practice with his stegosaurus-like coat.

Blue Cross was called on to take in the straggly stray, who needed to be clipped, groomed and bathed under general anaesthetic as well as undergo treatment for several other health issues.

SORRY STATE

Elisha Webber, Animal Welfare Assistant at Burford, says: "Poor Brian was in such a sorry state when he arrived with us.

"He was severely matted along his spine, dehydrated and was covered in fleas and ticks. He also needed extensive dental work and some teeth removed.

"He takes time to build trust in people since being homeless but he's a very sweet-natured boy. He enjoys his food and loves to curl up in a nice warm spot."

Brian was also neutered to stop him straying in the future.

Once he was well enough, we found him a wonderful new home where he is now being showered with the love he deserves.

New owner Gillian Dobbs says: "Brian is settling in nicely, he is also very spoilt. He was with us all over the house from day one and he wanders about, but his favourite place is on the sofa in the conservatory."



Two lives TRANSFORMED

Age is no barrier to rehoming here at Blue Cross, and Margaret and Petra's story is a shining example of why...

I just can't believe I'm so lucky. And I'm forever being told by friends and neighbours how lucky I am to have such a perfect little pet," says Margaret Cox, of her dog Petra.

If the little Yorkshire terrier could speak, she would surely say the same about her wonderful new owner, who came into her life when she needed it the most.



“

Mum took her first ever selfie within two days of Petra cuddled up on her chest sleeping. They really are good friends. It's nice to see mum smiling all the time

”



Last year, aged nine, Petra found herself in need of a new home when her owner's circumstances changed.

Meanwhile, Margaret was struggling to find happiness after the death of her previous dog Molly, who was a gift from her late husband John 14 years earlier.

As well as feeling lost and lonely without a pet, the 84-year-old wasn't getting out as much and began to

realise what an integral part of her social life a dog had been.

SEARCH

With the help of her daughter Jackie, Margaret started her search for a new four-legged friend and soon came across Petra on the Blue Cross website. As she was on our Home Direct scheme, Petra stayed with her former owner until she was rehomed.

Once Petra went to live with Margaret in Somerset, they developed an immediate bond.

They're often found cuddled up together on the sofa and Margaret is rarely out of Petra's sight.

The little yorkie will even perch on the arm of the sofa when Margaret is in the kitchen to see her owner through the hatch in the wall.

Margaret says: "She has given



me company. She's my ninth dog and by far the best I've ever had. She's just a happy little dog.

"She's gorgeous, she really is."

BELONGING

Together they enjoy daily walks and games of fetch in the field opposite their home.

Petra has also given a sense of social belonging back to former dental nurse Margaret, who helped set up a local dog-walking group six years ago and was soon going to lunch with up to 25 new friends.

"I continued walking after I lost Molly but it's so much nicer when you have your own pet," she says.

The incredible impact Petra has had on Margaret's life is also clear for all her friends and family to see.

Jackie says: "Having Petra has made such a difference to mum. She had been quite miserable and down in the dumps and needed something to lift her spirits – and Petra has done that beyond all reason.

"She's a great companion, she keeps mum fit – she's always on the go and has a reason to get up in the morning and somebody to talk to during the day. She takes Petra everywhere with her.

"So, they really have bonded, and it happened very quickly.

"Mum took her first ever selfie within

two days of Petra cuddled up on her chest sleeping.

"They really are good friends. It's nice to see mum smiling all the time."

HAPPINESS

Lara Alford, Centre Manager at Blue Cross Southampton, which arranged Petra's rehoming, adds: "We're so pleased that Margaret could give Petra a second shot at happiness.

"Their story is exactly the reason why we have no age restrictions on rehoming at Blue Cross.

"Margaret offered everything Petra needed in a home and so much more. They are a perfect match and have an incredible bond."

Rehoming

Could you take me home?

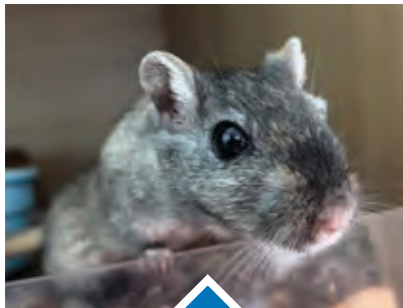


These wonderful pets are in search of a second chance

MATILDA

Age is just a number as far as I'm concerned, but now that I'm 14, I think I deserve to live out my golden years exploring a nice garden, sunning myself and napping. I'm a sweet lady and love a bit of fuss, on my terms.

Burford, 0300 777 1570



MARSHMALLOW

I'm a pretty girl, don't you think? I'm nearly two now and looking for a home where I can mature among some fun friends. I've even got potential to become a riding or driving pony. I'd love to hear from you!

Rolleston, 0300 777 1520



MARS

I'm told I'm an unusual lady as I can't live with other gerbils. We just don't get along, you see. I much prefer people to keep me entertained with lots of enrichment, but I'm struggling to find anyone that wants just me.

Suffolk, 0300 777 1480



ROXY

Would you just look at that big staffie smile of mine? I have so much love and fun to give but I've been waiting a long time for the fresh start I need. I may be eight but I still love my walkies, tennis balls and playing tug.

Manchester, 0300 777 1592



PUMPKIN

Anyone out there with a quiet, rural home for me? I've been waiting a while. I love people but, due to some scary things in my past, I need lots of support to settle, so am looking for patient humans to help.

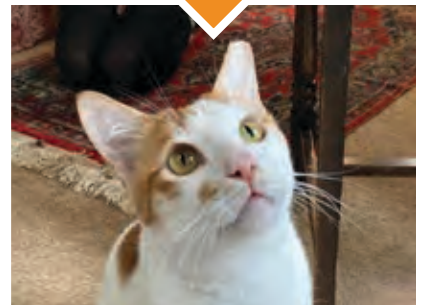
Newport, 0300 777 1590



DIDI

Hi there! I may be a little nervous when I first meet you but once I've learned to trust, I'm an affectionate girl with lots of love to give. I'd love to find a calm home where I can put my paws up and enjoy lots of attention.

Rolleston, 0300 777 1520



Find your new best friend at bluecross.org.uk/rehome



Pets and FIREWORKS

Big bangs and bright lights filling the sky can be terrifying for some pets...

Bonfire Night, as well as other celebrations involving fireworks, can be a stressful time for both pets and owners. Closing windows and curtains, and keeping on normal background noise, can help dogs and cats feel settled at home. But owners of animals that are afraid should always get advice from the vet, as there may be medication to calm them. The below steps will also limit stress.

DOGS

Puppies should ideally be familiarised with firework noise to avoid future problems. Sound therapy starting at least four to six months before Bonfire Night can also help older dogs – and Blue Cross has an online programme for this. But when fireworks are active:

- Allow dogs to pace, whine and hide if they want to
- Prepare a cosy den where they can feel secure with some clothes bearing your scent for reassurance
- Stay at home and keep calm, act normally and give praise for relaxed behaviour

CATS

- Keep cats inside during fireworks and close all outside access
- Ensure microchip details are up to date in case they do get outside
- Ensure they have an undisturbed hiding spot to retreat to

SMALL PETS

- Bring outside hutches and cages inside into a quiet room, garage or shed. If that's not possible, turn it against a wall or fence and block out lights with a thick blanket.
- Provide extra bedding so your pets can burrow to feel safe

HORSES AND PONIES

- Fireworks should not be set off near horses, so make display organisers aware if yours is kept close by
- If your horse lives outside and you are concerned, stable them at night a few days before fireworks to get them used to them. Remove any potential injury hazards, such as hay nets.
- Ensure someone experienced stays with your horse to keep them calm but limit handling for human safety

See our full fireworks preparation advice at bluecross.org.uk/fireworks



Some of the street cats in Ukraine being delivered food



There for the **PETS OF WAR**

Our rich history includes helping animals caught up in conflict, and the Ukraine War is no different...

Chilled to the bone but miraculously safe, Odessa arrived at Ukraine's border with Romania as the dachshund's owners fled the atrocities of war.

Leaving behind a lifetime of memories, the family arrived with only what they could carry on the perilous

journey to escape the Russian onslaught, which razed their house in Mykolaiv to the ground.

Thankfully, aid was waiting for Odessa's owners – as it was for their beloved pet, because of Save the Dogs, a charity supported by Blue Cross's Ukraine Pet Welfare Fund.

CONFLICT

We have a long history of helping animals in times of conflict.

In 1912, The Blue Cross Fund was set up to help animals during the Balkan War, and today, we are helping those affected by the devastating situation in Ukraine.



Odessa is held by her devastated owner as they cross the border into Romania



Pets are arriving in need of many essentials, like carriers



Thousands of pets have been displaced by the conflict

A dog and owner at Save the Dogs's pop-up centre on the Romanian border with Ukraine



So far, our kind supporters have helped us to raise £250,000, which has been divided between three charities delivering life-saving care to the pets of war. The other two charities are Animal Care Society (TOZ) in Poland, and Transylvania Animal Care in Romania.

It means that dogs like Odessa are given coats to keep warm, food and – crucially – a carrier in which they can continue their onward journey with their family across Europe.

Gregg Tully, Country Director for Save the Dogs in Romania, says: "Our team met Odessa's family during one

of the worst times in their lives. We were able to give them reassurance and show compassion for them and their four-legged family member."

Blue Cross support is also ensuring that starving cats and dogs left behind on the battle-strewn streets of Ukraine are fed and that refugee pets get the vet care they need.

WELCOMING

Meanwhile, our Hertfordshire rehoming centre has welcomed Ukrainian pets, providing loving care during their quarantine period until they can be reunited with their


owners, who have arrived in the UK on the refugee sponsorship scheme.

Chris Burghes, Chief Executive of Blue Cross, says: "The past few months have seen us go back to our roots with the response to the events in Ukraine. The way our teams have responded to this conflict has been outstanding and we have led the way in the UK in assisting pets and keeping them with their owners."

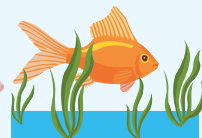
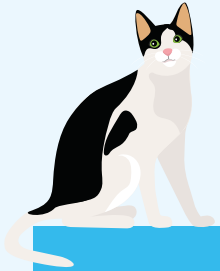
Almost seven million refugees have fled Ukraine since February, many travelling with their much-loved pets. Thanks to your support, Blue Cross will continue to be there for them.

Find out more about the Blue Cross Ukraine Pet Welfare Fund and how to donate at bluecross.org.uk/ukraine

BIG PET CENSUS 2022

Over the past 125 years, we've helped change the lives of millions of pets, and the people who love them, but we know there is more to do. To understand more about your pets and the issues that matter most to you, we launched the Big Pet Census. Here's a sneak peek of what almost 100,000 of you had to say... 

The pets people are living with



Dogs
58%

Cats
51%

Smalls
12%

Fish
10%

Rabbits
7%

Horses
6%

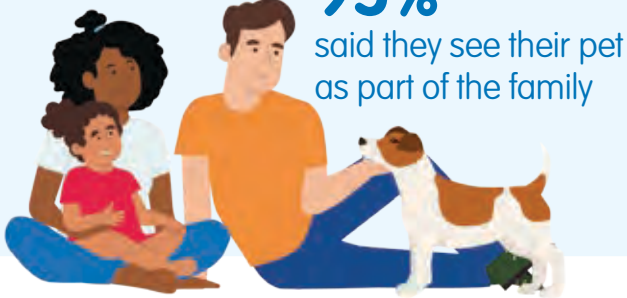
*14% other





Almost **1 in 4** pet owners would ask their pet if they were happy

Nearly **80%** of people celebrate their pets birthday



95% said they see their pet as part of the family

35% got their pets from a UK based charity



93% felt their pet brought them companionship

91% said their pet comes to them for affection



What pet welfare issue concerns you most?

The issues that matter most to you are:

- Poor breeding of pets **21%**
- Puppy and kitten farms **22%**
- Insufficient breed knowledge from some owners **15%**
- Pet abandonment **13%**

That's why we're campaigning to improve education around animal welfare and ensuring there are laws in place to protect our pets.



To explore all of the Big Pet Census, visit bluecross.org.uk/the-big-pet-census-2022

Fundraise for Blue Cross this year

Request our fundraising
pack for ideas on how you
can help pets in need?



Our pack includes tips and advice on planning
your activity and making the most of the fun.

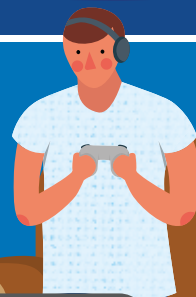
From dog
walks...

**Bark
in the
Dark**



... to gaming
and streaming

**PAWS
2 PLAY**



... to cake sales...



Pets change lives
We change theirs

There is something to suit everyone –
with lots of virtual activities too.

Simply fill in the coupon at the back of the
magazine or visit bluecross.org.uk/fundraising

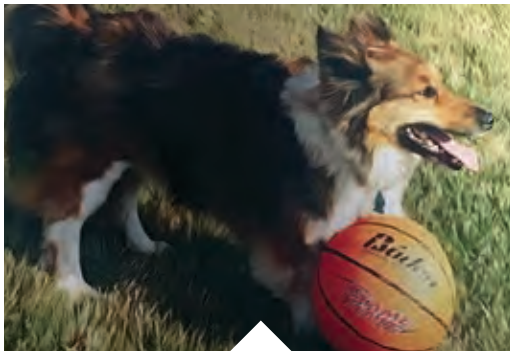
Blue Cross is a charity that has been helping sick,
injured and homeless pets since 1897.



Letters

We love to hear from you

Please send us your news and pictures of your pets!



REMEMBERING PAN

I adopted my dog Pan in 2006 when I was a volunteer for Blue Cross. About two years later, I married and moved out to America.

He had an amazing life out here with us, travelled thousands of miles, lived in Montana and Michigan but visited many other states. He saw a bear, buffalo, went to national parks and peed on the giant redwoods in California.

He loved walking and swimming and adapted to anywhere, as long as he was with us. He was the dog of my life and a very special and unique boy, he understood so much.

He was at least 16 years old when we lost him in 2020.

Dot Pennington

'THEY BRING US JOY EVERY DAY'

We rehomed Millie and Max, driving three hours from Buckinghamshire to Manchester to collect this 'husbun' and wife on the 2 January. Their owner was no longer able to look after them.

They have settled in really well, with Max (grey) sprinting around the house and binkying uncontrollably and Millie (white) bowing her head for strokes. Both are obsessed with coriander and parsley and go mad when they hear us opening the packet!

They bring us joy every day and we thank the Blue Cross for connecting us.

Becky Statham



We love to hear how Blue Cross pets are changing lives...

Please email your letters and photos to editor@bluecross.org.uk or write to For Pets Editor, Blue Cross, Shilton Road, Burford, Oxon OX18 4PF

Find us on Facebook & Twitter

/thebluecrossUK @The_Blue_Cross

RESCUED GUINEA PIGS

We rescued two guinea pigs from Blue Cross a year ago called Briggs and Stratton. I just wanted to let you know how well they're getting on. My six and 11-year-old girls absolutely love them. They are growing big and love the outside run with all the grass to eat.

Lisa Stanley

LONELY worlds collide

Bertie and Shortcake were sad
and alone until Blue Cross brought
them together...



Bertie (left) and Shortcake are now bonded and happy



“

They have been together ever since and are now happily living together as ‘husbun’ and wife

”

to move Bertie and Shortcake onto fully-fledged meets, which gradually built up the time they spent as a pair until they were ready to move in with each other.

“They have been together ever since and are now very happily living together as ‘husbun’ and wife,” says Matthew, who oversaw their care.

Bertie was one in an accidental litter and only a few weeks old when he arrived at our Hertfordshire rehoming centre earlier this year.

Rabbits are sociable creatures who need to live with their own kind to be happy and feel safe, and the most harmonious pairings are unrelated bunnies of the opposite sex.

And so, after spending more than six months all on his own while he waited to find a home, Bertie became downhearted and lonely.

DOWNHEARTED

That was until white bunny Shortcake came along. At four months old, she was found abandoned in a park and had also been alone for some time at our Burford centre in Oxfordshire.

Matthew Pedley, Animal Welfare

Assistant at Hertfordshire, says: “We decided to try and find Bertie a companion as he had been on his own for a really long time and sadly wasn’t getting any interest.

“We messaged other Blue Cross centres to see if they had a lonely female needing a friend and Burford replied saying they had Shortcake who, on paper, looked like a good match for him.”

Shortcake was transferred to our Hertfordshire site and, once she had settled in, the team began the bonding process.

INTRODUCTIONS

It started with scent-swapping, before letting them see each other from a distance, and then careful introductions over a barrier.

Eventually, the team was able

UNWANTED

Sadly, Bertie and Shortcake are only two of many unwanted rabbits we’ve helped in recent years.

Rabbits can breed from as young as four months old, and females can become pregnant again as soon as they have given birth.

Young rabbits can be tricky to sex, and it’s not uncommon for bunny purchasers to take home a pet of the opposite sex to what they were sold.

These reasons, together with rising numbers of bunnies being given up after lockdown, are contributing to a rabbit welfare crisis that Blue Cross is picking up the pieces of.

Matthew adds: “Many people don’t know that rabbits are social creatures who need to live in bonded pairs to enjoy a happy life. Single bunnies are lonely bunnies and living alone can make them depressed.”



Foster carer Christine Tilt with Moana and Tinkerbell



FAIRYTALE ENDING for abandoned dogs

A group of seven tiny dogs dumped beside a pond in cat carriers are safe now, thanks to Blue Cross...

Trembling with fear and hiding in their kennel, Moana and Tinkerbell were tiny shells of dogs.

Along with Ariel, Arthur, Belle, Tarzan and Jasmine, they were abandoned in a cat carrier in a local

park without access to food or water before coming into our Southampton team's care.

It was crucial, once Moana and Tinkerbell had received the vet treatment they needed, that we got them into foster care to limit stress

and allow us to understand their personalities and needs.

This is where volunteers like Christine Tilt come in, to provide life-changing care to pets. She is one of hundreds of foster carers around the country making our work possible.



Animal Welfare Assistant,
Caroline Oram, with Moana



Words can't explain how rewarding fostering is, unless you've done it and see that joy – to see them go out of that door happy



LIFELONG

Christine, who lost the last of her dogs in October 2021, became a foster carer for Blue Cross earlier this year, having been a lifelong supporter of our charity, as was her late husband.

She felt unable to take on another dog due to her age and circumstances and wanted to give something back in return for all the "joy" her beloved dogs had brought her for 40 years.

Moana, a Yorkshire terrier and dachshund cross, and Tinkerbell, a jack russell and Chihuahua cross, were her second placement and the difference she made to the bonded duo was immeasurable.

Moana, who had skin issues and fur loss due to stress, relied heavily on Tinkerbell for confidence at the beginning and was even scared of her own tail.

But, within a few days of arriving in Christine's care, she became more confident and independent.

GOLD DUST

Caroline Oram, Animal Welfare Assistant at our Bromsgrove rehoming centre, which arranged Moana and Tinkerbell's care, says: "Foster carers like Christine are like gold dust to us.

"Within a couple of weeks, the difference in them was amazing.

"Their coats were better, Moana's fur had started to grow back, and she was more confident in meeting people. They were thriving."

After a month, the pint-sized pair were able to go to a loving new home together. The other dogs they were abandoned alongside also found families to love them.

Christine says: "Words can't explain how rewarding fostering is, unless you've done it and see that joy – to see them go out of that door happy.

"It was sad to say goodbye to Moana and Tinkerbell but lovely to know that I did all I could to get them ready for a new home – that's my job, that's my purpose."

News

Bitesize Stories



All the latest news from Blue Cross



Elderly cat homeless

At the grand old age of 15 years, Mr Darcy found himself homeless after his owner sadly passed away.

The black cat, who is just as handsome as his literary namesake, arrived at Blue Cross Hertfordshire rehoming centre in February looking for a new home where he could relax in his golden years.

"Mr Darcy lived his 15 years as a lap cat in a loving home," says Matt Pedley, Animal Welfare Assistant. "He did well here at the centre but couldn't wait to be in a home again where he can be the centre of someone's world."

The distinguished chap was suffering from health problems which meant he needed further support.

Matt continues: "Poor Mr Darcy has an eye condition called entropion, which is where the eyelid is turned inwards and causes the eyelashes and fur to rub on the eye. It must be very irritating and painful for him."

The team at the rehoming centre cared for Mr Darcy's eyes with medicated eye drops and gels as his eye condition left him suffering from conjunctivitis. He was also placed on a special diet for cats with liver problems, as well as close monitoring during his time at Blue Cross.

Matt adds: "After nearly five months in our care, Mr Darcy finally found a new home to live out the rest of his days being showered with all the love that his previous owner would have wanted for him."

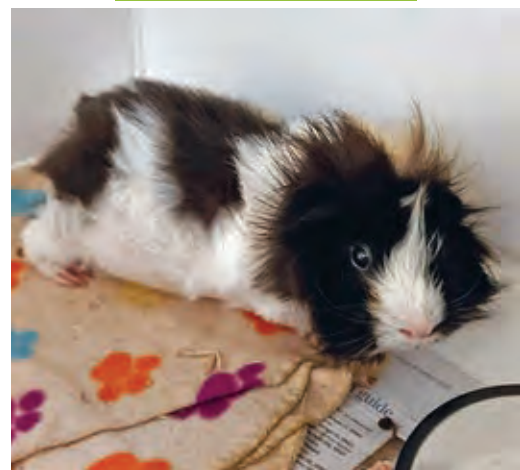
ABANDONED IN A BOX

Stephen was abandoned in a box with another poorly male guinea pig with just a note to say they were fighting.

He was so skinny that vets could feel his ribs and hips, and was suffering from an infection in his paw, likely due to bad living conditions in his previous home.

Sadly, the other guinea pig, called Lewis, died. Stephen recovered and has since been rehomed with a lady guinea pig.

Guinea pigs need to live with their own kind to be happy, but the best pairings tend to be two females or a neutered male and female as males are prone to fighting each other.





A legacy lives on

A generous supporter has left Blue Cross £1,000 in her will after our charity saved the life of her beloved dog more than 70 years ago.

Betty Clarke, who passed away from Covid-19 last year, had always spoken about how our Victoria animal hospital cared for her golden cocker spaniel, Bridie, in 1946.

Bridie was a wedding gift from her husband, but the puppy fell ill soon after she was welcomed home.

HAPPY LIFE

Mrs Clarke's daughter, Sue Paterson, says: "Bridie had rickets and once this was treated, she enjoyed a happy life with our family. My mother always spoke about Blue Cross.

"Bridie lived to be aged 10 and we all missed her when she died."

Our life-changing work is made possible by kind legacies left by animal lovers like Mrs Clarke, for which we are so very grateful.

If you're interested in leaving Blue Cross a gift like this, there are two free ways of making your will – through a service called Bequeathed or the Free Wills Network.

Call 0300 777 1757 or visit bluecross.org.uk/gift-your-will for more details.

ONE-EYED KITTEN'S FRESH START

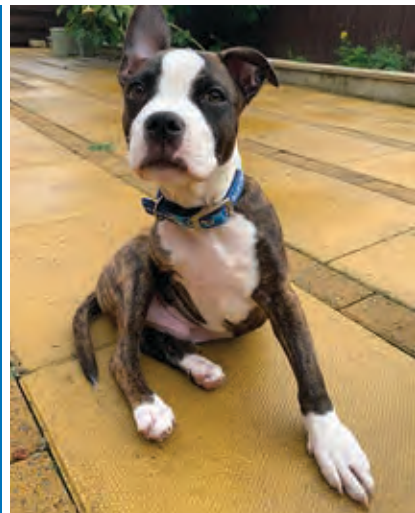
A tiny one-eyed kitten has found a new home after coming into Blue Cross care in pain and petrified.

Candy Cane had a ruptured right eye and our vets had no alternative but to remove it to put her out of pain. She then recovered from the operation with foster carer Wendy Penfold, who also helped to build up her shattered confidence.

CONFIDENCE

Wendy says: "When Candy came to me, she'd lost her trust in humans and was very nervous. She would run and hide when I'd come into the room but by the end of her time with me, she became more inquisitive to know what I was doing and staying in the same area as me."

Thanks to the loving care provided by Wendy and our vets, Candy Cane went on to find a wonderful home.



PUPPY ADAPTS TO LIFE ON THREE LEGS

A tiny puppy who had only just learned to walk before facing life on three legs is thriving despite his disability.

Dougie, a mastiff staffie cross, arrived in the care of our Grimsby animal hospital in Lincolnshire in October last year after shattering his elbow jumping off a sofa onto laminate flooring.

Unable to fix his broken bone, vets needed to remove the two-month-old's right front leg to free him of his pain.

Once he was on the road to recovery, Dougie was placed in foster care arranged by our Thirsk rehoming centre in Yorkshire. And, after 30 days of TLC, vital socialisation and training, he found a wonderful new family.



Whatever happened to?

Every year Blue Cross finds families for thousands of homeless pets. We've caught up with a familiar face to see how they're doing...



HONEYDEW

Honeydew was stressed, thin and suffering from partial alopecia when she was abandoned with her five kittens in the cold on Christmas Eve last year.

Despite the sorry state she was in, the doting mum had made sure her precious kittens, who we named Apple, Clementine, Apricot, Pomegranate and Fig were all safe, healthy and warm.

Blue Cross foster carer, Wendy Penfold, took in the whole family to give them the care and space they needed until they were all able to be found happy homes.

She says: "It was nice to see Honeydew revert back to the playful young cat she was before she went to her new home, purring and headbutting me – that is the biggest reward of fostering."

WARNING AFTER KITTEN'S WINDOW FALL

A 16-week-old kitten required emergency surgery after falling from a third-floor window.

Dory came into the Blue Cross animal hospital in Victoria, central London, with a badly fractured leg that vets had to amputate.

She faced several weeks of rehabilitation in foster care before we found her a new home.

Anna Ewers Clark, Veterinary Lead at Blue Cross, said: "Each year we sadly see cats who have fallen from open windows or balconies.

"Like Dory, they are often experiencing their first summer and curious to see a window or door open. We also see older cats who have fallen out of a window after finding a spot to snooze on."

Blue Cross advises cat owners to install tip and tilt windows or use netting or a screen across windows or balconies.





Homeless sick dog **FINDS LOVE**

One plucky chihuahua with health problems hasn't let them stop him finding love.

Eight-year-old Teddy came to Blue Cross looking for a new home when, devastatingly, his previous owner was no longer able to care for him.

"Being forced to part with a beloved pet due to circumstances beyond your control is utterly heartbreaking," says Aaron Potter, Animal Welfare Assistant at Blue Cross Hertfordshire, which cared for Teddy.

Teddy had been his previous

owner's constant companion for many years. So, when he came into our centre, he understandably found kennels lonely and isolating.

Being used to cuddling up on a lap for hours at a time, we knew a foster home would make him much more comfortable during his time with us.

HEALTH CHECK

Each and every pet who comes into our rehoming centres undergoes a full health check on arrival. We noticed Teddy had a persistent

cough, so he underwent tests which revealed he had a collapsed trachea, or windpipe.

Tracheal collapse can be a very serious disease, causing breathing difficulties and wheezing in many cases. Fortunately for Teddy, further testing revealed he was suffering from a mild grade of the condition, which can be managed with medication.

Being on the portly side, we also put Teddy on a weight-loss diet which, as well as being good for his overall health, will help to control – although not cure – his condition.

And after 79 days in Blue Cross care, Teddy left us – tail wagging – to begin his next chapter as a much-loved family pet.



WIN! A dog-friendly hotel stay

Life is always better with pets by our side, and our friends at Pan Pacific London are offering one lucky reader the chance to win a luxury dog-friendly hotel stay.

Located in the heart of the City, moments from Liverpool Street Station, Pan Pacific London is near iconic landmarks including the Gherkin and the Tower Bridge.

Inside, it is a pet paradise with freshly cooked meals and services including dog walking, grooming and even massage to keep tails wagging.

Jillian McCondach, Lorcan Wood and D Band are the winners of the Burgess pet supplies prize in the spring issue of For Pets. Congratulations!

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning a trip for two people and one dog, staying for one night at the Pan Pacific London, answer the following question:

On page 26, we brought you the story of lonely rabbit Bertie. What is the name of his new bunny companion?

- Shortbread
- Shortcake
- Shorty

Fill in your name and contact details and post to:*

Freepost BLUE CROSS FOR PETS

Or, enter online at bluecross.org.uk/forpets

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

Closing date Friday, 30 September
*Strictly one entry per household.

Terms and conditions apply to this competition. Blue Cross respects your privacy and will keep your information safe and secure and will only use it in accordance with our Privacy Policy. We will not sell, rent or share your personal data with other organisations for their marketing purposes. We may use your data for profiling purposes to make future communications more relevant to you. To see more about how we will use your information visit bluecross.org.uk/privacy

*You can change your preferences at any time by contacting our Supporter Care Team on 0300 790 9903 or email info@bluecross.org.uk

FIND US

Discover your local Blue Cross

We have 55 shops and
9 rehoming college
partnership locations

Our animal hospitals

- 1 Grimsby
- 2 Hammersmith
- 3 Merton
- 4 Victoria

Our pet care clinics

- 5 Ashford (Kent)
- 6 Derby
- 7 Luton
- 8 Torbay
- 9 York

Our rehoming units and centres

- 10 Bromsgrove
- 11 Burford
- 12 Cambridge (coming soon)
- 13 Exeter
- 14 Hertfordshire (Kimpton)
- 15 Manchester
- 16 Newport
- 17 Rolleston
- 18 Sheffield
- 19 Southampton
- 20 Suffolk (Ipswich)
- 21 Thirsk



Say hello, find your nearest Blue Cross or make a donation

Call: 0300 790 9903 **Email:** info@bluecross.org.uk **Visit:** bluecross.org.uk

Write to us: Freepost BLUE CROSS FOR PETS

Book a free education talk

Animal welfare and responsible pet ownership workshops for children and young people in schools.

Call: 0300 111 8950 **Visit:** bluecross.org.uk/education

Pet Bereavement Support Service

Free and confidential support for anyone coping with the loss of a pet, for any reason.

Call: 0800 096 6606. Lines open every day, 8.30am to 8.30pm.

Email: pbssmail@bluecross.org.uk



Pets change lives
We change theirs

Loving care for her. Peace of mind for you.



Pets change lives
We change theirs



Please send me a Blue Cross:

- Pet Peace of Mind information pack
- Gifts in Will information pack

Title:	B222
First name:	
Surname:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone:	

If you are happy for us to contact you by phone, please tick*



Our **Pet Peace of Mind service** means your pet will be loved and cared for after you've gone.

We understand how much your pets mean to you and how important it is that they are well looked after, no matter what happens. There is no cost to register your pets onto the service, but many people choose to remember Blue Cross with a gift in their Will.

To request an information pack please call **0300 777 1910** or fill in the coupon and send to **Freepost Blue Cross for Pets**.

**Thank you for your
continued support.**

bluecross.org.uk/pet-peace-of-mind

*From time to time we may wish to communicate with you by phone with news about the pets you are helping and ways you can help in the future. If you are happy for us to do this, please fill in your details above.

Blue Cross is a charity registered in England and Wales (224392) and in Scotland (SC040154).

