

THE PetPatrol POST

A LIFESTYLE GUIDE FOR THE PET LOVING OWNER ©



STRATEGY...

Strategy... "A detailed plan for achieving success in situations such as war, politics, business, industry, or sport, or the skill of planning for such situations."

During lockdown I gave considerable thought to how I could say thank you to clients for joining me on my journey and continuing to be part of my story. I am, therefore, super excited that clients can now take advantage of the *The VIPaws Club* which unlocks exclusive rewards!



Announcement..

There is an amazing opportunity to welcome a new recruit to the #TeamWoofers family! Our small and personal rural adventures are aimed at dogs akin to a healthy, stimulating and outdoor lifestyle - guaranteeing a fun, safe and happy experience for your beloved friend. Spaces are rarely available for long, so now is the perfect opportunity to get in touch if you're interested! You can email zita@petpatrol365.co.uk to learn more.

"We know that Lily is in very experienced trustworthy and loving hands"...



"There is great excitement in our house every Monday morning - #TeamWoofers Day with Auntie Zee! As soon as she has her harness on, Lily, our Cocker Spaniel, sits expectantly by the door listening for Zita's car. She's never disappointed. This is the highlight of Lily's week when she spends the morning walking, playing games and socialising with her canine friends on Ashdown Forest. Zita is passionate about the dogs she walks, takes care that they all get on together, will walk in all kinds of weather and is extremely reliable. She is also kind and approachable, very knowledgeable about dogs and is most generous with her time and advice. We know that Lily is in very experienced, trustworthy and loving hands on those Monday mornings, and she returns home a tired and very contented dog. Bliss. Now where's that harness ?" **Mrs Colyer, Danehill**

WELCOME



Welcome to your Summer edition of The Pet Patrol Post, where you can find out about all the latest and greatest things happening in the world of Pet Patrol 365 before anyone else!

Self-care in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak was vital and walking is recognised for promoting better mental health (including self-perception, self-esteem, mood and sleep quality) and it reduces stress, anxiety and fatigue. With this in mind, the Ashdown Unleashed walks will be returning soon! Please keep an eye on the Pet Patrol 365 Facebook page for details.

So kick back and relax, we've got the accompaniment to your morning coffee right here!

3 WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME...
HONEST, FRIENDLY, RESPECTFUL!

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ASK THE EXPERTS

HANNAH LAND, VETERINARY SURGEON

PORTLAND VETS

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#TeamPortland
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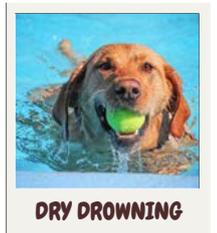
HOW TO ENJOY THE SUMMER SUN SAFELY WITH YOUR DOGS!

The summer months can present many hazards for our dogs, so it is important to be vigilant. This year, more than ever before, we should be looking to PREVENT PROBLEMS before they arise. Here we outline some of the common hazards and give you some top tips on how to keep your 4-legged friends safe, whilst enjoying the summer sun!

DRY DROWNING. Ever heard of “dry drowning”? Most people haven’t, but it’s a real danger! Whilst dogs are swimming and playing in the water, they can inhale excessive amounts of water. This water can build up in the lungs, causing breathing problems. Your dog can seem initially normal, but can then “drown”, up to 3 days after the event.

How do you know your dog has inhaled too much water?

- Your dog may be shivering or become very cold soon after the event.
- He may look dazed and wobbly when moving around.
- He may start vomiting.
- His gums may look a different colour to normal.
- Your dog may be coughing and having breathing difficulties.



TOP TIPS TO PREVENT DRY DROWNING:

- Make sure your dog takes regular breaks from the water, before they get tired.
- Always watch your dog in the water. Are they struggling? Do they need to take a break? Puppies and old dogs need more breaks.
- Never let your dog gulp water from a hose pipe.
- Don't throw sticks/toys TOO far.
- Use FLAT toys so they don't have to open their mouths very wide to grasp it.
- Do not encourage diving for toys or stones.
- Some dogs are at higher risk, for example dogs with blindness, epilepsy, dementia signs or arthritis. Be more careful!

IF YOU ARE AT ALL CONCERNED YOUR DOG MAY HAVE INHALED EXCESSIVE AMOUNTS OF WATER, CONTACT YOUR VET IMMEDIATELY!

TICKS. One of the most common summer dangers are ticks. As well as causing your dog to itch, they can spread diseases when they latch on to our dog and feed on their blood. UK ticks can carry the bacterial disease Lyme Disease. Symptoms include intermittent lameness, a fever, lethargy (and headaches in humans). Lyme Disease can be difficult to diagnose in dogs, so prevention is important!



TOP TIPS TO PREVENT YOUR DOG GETTING TICKS:

- Use tick-control products regularly. Purchase from your vet to ensure the product will work.
- Check your dog for ticks after each walk. Groom them thoroughly and check around the ears, eyes, on the chin, around the muzzle, as well as in between their pads and toes.
- If you find a tick DO NOT PANIC! DO NOT PULL IT STRAIGHT OFF! The tick needs to be removed properly, to ensure all the mouth parts are removed and none are left in the skin, which can cause inflammation and infection. You can buy a tick removal tool from your vet.

IF YOU ARE AT ALL CONCERNED ABOUT TICKS, CONTACT YOUR VET FOR ADVICE.

BITES & STINGS. Wasps, bees and even adders are difficult to avoid completely in the summer months.

IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR DOG HAS BEEN STUNG OR BITTEN AND THERE IS SWELLING OR PAIN OR ANY OTHER SYMPTOMS, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR VETERINARY SURGERY IMMEDIATELY.



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HOW TO ENJOY THE SUMMER SUN SAFELY WITH YOUR DOGS!



HEAT STROKE. Heat stroke occurs when your dog's body temperature rises above normal but is not caused by a fever. It occurs when dogs can no longer self-regulate their temperature. Dogs who are overweight or have a particularly short nose (Bull Dogs for example), or have a very thick, dense coat are more at risk.

Signs of Heat Stroke:

- Fast heavy panting
- Excessive drooling and thirst
- Barking/whining/signs of agitation
- Increased heartbeat
- Red or purple gums and tongue
- Staggering, weak, collapsed, seizures

TOP TIPS TO PREVENT HEAT STROKE:

- **NEVER EVER LEAVE YOUR DOG IN A PARKED CAR OR CONSERVATORY!** Temperatures can rise extremely quickly, and symptoms of heat stroke can be seen after as little as 15 minutes.
- Restrict exercise on hot days and make sure lots of shade and water are available. Sun stroke can occur on very hot days when your dog's body hasn't had a chance to acclimatise to the rise in temperature.
- On a hot day walk your dog early in the morning or in the evening.
- On a hot day spray your dog with cool water.
- At Portland Vets we recommend that all short-nosed breeds of dog and dense coated dogs wear a cooling jacket on hot days. This can be purchased from us!

IF YOUR DOG IS SHOWING SIGNS OF HEAT STROKE CONTACT YOUR VET IMMEDIATELY!

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE. This is an important hazard for your dog to avoid! It is actually a group of bacteria called Cyanobacteria, not algae! It looks like algae as it clumps together on the surface of water in "blooms" and looks like blue-green (pea-coloured) scum on the water's surface. It is common in non-flowing water in hot weather and it is toxic to all life, so you may see dead fish. If dogs ingest blue-green algae they can become very ill and commonly die, very quickly. It causes liver failure and long-term health problems if they survive.

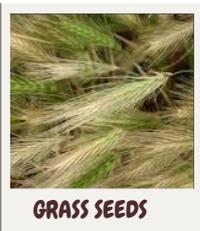


TOP TIPS TO PREVENT BLUE-GREEN ALGAE INTOXICATION:

- Do not allow your dog to swim in water that contains blue-green algae.
- Do not allow your dog to drink from water containing blue-green algae.
- Take note of warning signs about blue-green algae whilst out walking.
- Keep your dog on a lead until you know the water is safe, whilst out walking near lakes and ponds.

IF YOUR DOG INGESTS/SWIMS IN BLUE-GREEN ALGAE CONTACT YOUR VET IMMEDIATELY!

FOREIGN BODIES. Stick injuries, splinters, grass seeds, BBQ bones, are common hazards in the Summer months.



TOP TIPS TO PREVENT FOREIGN BODY INJURIES:

- Don't encourage play with sticks or throw sticks for your dog.
- Never give cooked bones to your dog. Cooking the bones makes them brittle and prone to splintering in your dog's mouth. These sharp splinters can then get stuck in their mouth or cause problems after being swallowed.
- Check your dog thoroughly after each walk, especially ears and paws for grass seeds or anything else stuck in them.
- Long haired breeds - useful to keep the hair in between their toes clipped short, so grass seeds are less likely to become stuck and cause problems.
- Watch out for any lameness or head shaking after a walk.

IF YOU ARE AT ALL CONCERNED ABOUT FOREIGN BODIES, CONTACT YOUR VET FOR ADVICE.

ASK THE EXPERTS

CIARA GAISHER

MERLIN VETERINARY PHYSIOTHERAPY
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#BetterTogether

TOP TIPS FOR YOUR OWN MUSCULOSKELETAL HEALTH WHEN DOG WALKING



MUSCULOSKELETAL

If you normally wear a bag to carry treats, balls, poo bags etc., try to spread the load evenly to avoid a sore shoulder/wonky posture. A jacket with multiple pockets is best, e.g. a fishing coat. Or try a waist pouch so there's no weight on your shoulders, even a DIY toolbelt could work!

Avoid wrapping the lead around your wrist. This can lead to all sorts of injuries, or repetitive strain. If your dog pulls, use a more effective attachment like a halter, but the best option is to train them to walk politely on the lead. It's better for you and them.

Footwear: If you want to use your dog walks as beneficial exercise for yourself, try rocker soled trainers. But only wear these on flat, even surfaces, as they are too unstable on uneven ground and could easily twist your ankle. When walking across fields or the Forest, always wear proper walking boots. Wellies or shoes without ankle coverage don't provide enough stability for unpredictable terrain.

When going up hills, clench your buttocks. Activating the gluteal muscles not only gives you better tone and posture, it stops you using ineffective muscles that can lead to strain injuries.

If you spend a lot of time stopping for your dog to sniff things, try doing a few squats, lunges, standing up on your toes, balancing on one leg, and stretches. You might as well make use of the time to optimise your own muscles!

Swap the hand you're holding the lead in every now and again and swing the other arm. It's all about avoiding one-sided posture.

If you're concerned about twisting your ankle, ask a private physio to teach you a simple taping technique. Tape is a great first aid tool you can take with you, just in case it happens out on the forest you can strap it up until you get home.

A Companion is Gone but the Memory Lives On...

With heavy heart we said goodbye to faithful friends Purdy, Will & Rosie who passed over to Rainbow Bridge.



In life I loved you dearly,
In death I love you still.
In my heart you hold a place
No pet could ever fill.

If tears could build a stairway
And heartache make a lane,
I'd walk the path to heaven
And bring you back again.



PURDY

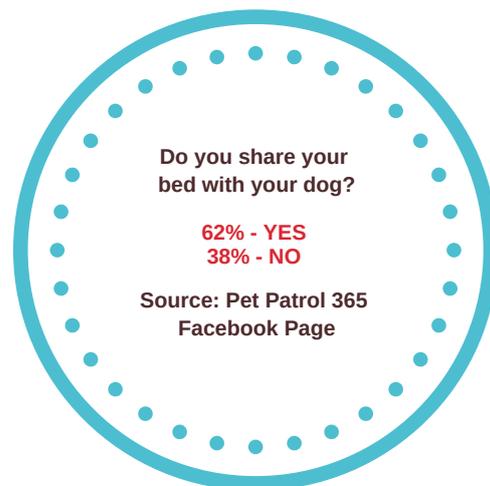
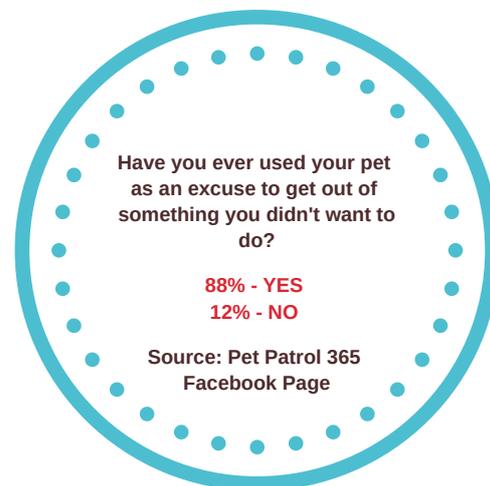


WILL



ROSIE

Purdy, an integral part of #TeamWoofers, was suddenly taken ill in February. Purdy's doting family were overseas at the time and I, along with their good friend, had the painful task of dealing with the enormity of the situation whilst providing support to her heartbroken family. Purdy would light up the room with her beauty, her soulful eyes and her big, big heart. She was affectionately known as 'Baby Girl' to her family and her passing has been an incredibly difficult journey for everyone who knew and loved her. Forever and always. X



ASK THE EXPERTS

ZITA WELLS

PET PATROL 365

01892 653548 or 07974 728967

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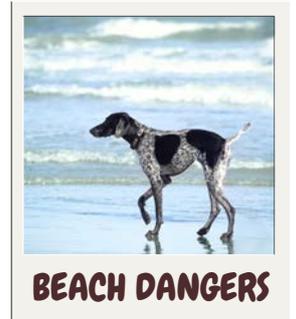
#BetterTogether

TOP 10 TIPS TO HELP KEEP YOUR DOG SAFE AT THE BEACH

We all love spending time at the beach and each year thousands of families head to the sands for a fun day out with their dogs. However, there are lots of hidden dangers that you need to consider.

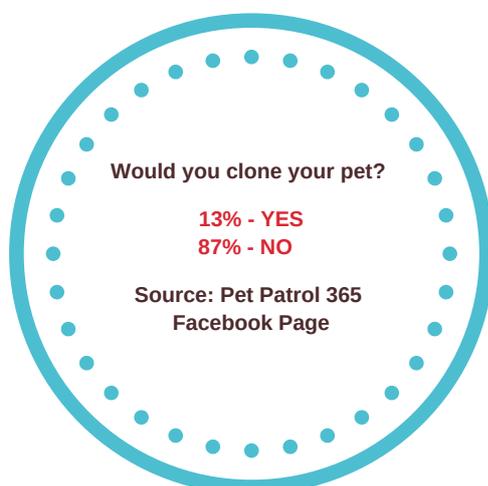
HERE'S MY TOP TIPS TO HELP KEEP YOUR DOG SAFE AT THE BEACH...

- Don't let your dog swim in strong tides or rolling waves - invest in a life vest and a long line.
- Don't let your dog eat sand which can cause impaction if inadvertently ingested by digging or picking up sandy balls.
- Don't let your dog eat dead fish that have been washed up on the beach. These may contain potentially deadly toxins.
- Don't let your dog drink salt water. The salt, bacteria and parasites in the water can make them sick. Carry fresh water to keep your dog hydrated.
- Don't let your dog stay in the sun for long as they can suffer with heatstroke too. Ensure your dog has plenty of water and shade at all times.
- Don't let your dog over-exercise as this can cause exhaustion. Bear in mind that running on sand takes a lot more effort than running on grass.
- Don't let your dog be exposed to high temperatures without sunscreen made specifically for dogs. Dogs suffer sunburn too. Breeds with short or white hair, and pink ears and nose are more susceptible.
- Don't let your dog eat washed up Palm oil which can sometimes be found on the shoreline. This can cause severe vomiting and diarrhoea when swallowed.
- Don't let your dog poop without clearing it up - be considerate to fellow beach goers and the environment.
- Don't forget to rinse your dog off thoroughly after the beach. Sand in-between the pads can irritate and cause hot spots, and salt can damage your dog's coat.



Safe and happy walking!

Zita x



THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PASSION...

INTERVIEW WITH CIARA GAISHER, CHARTERED PHYSIO & VETERINARY PHYSIO



Please describe your current role? I am a Chartered Physiotherapist, working part-time in the NHS as a senior specialist Musculoskeletal Physio, and part-time self-employed as a Veterinary Physiotherapist.

How do you keep your customers satisfied and build customer loyalty? I strive to provide the best possible, evidence-based treatment, ensuring the best possible outcomes for animals. I like to explain their condition, my findings and the evidence behind my treatments to their owners, always explaining realistic expectations rather than false promises.

Please tell us of at least one professional achievement I've been headhunted to work for a top veterinary physiotherapy company and achieved the highest grade (Distinction) in my Master's level degree in Veterinary Physiotherapy.

What motivates you? Whenever I see animals (usually dogs or horses) out and about that look in pain or lame, I think "I could help them!" I never know if the owners are aware that their pets are in pain, or that something could be done about it, but it really drives me to try and get the message out to the public that physiotherapy is as valuable for animals as it is for humans.

How do you measure your professional success? Physiotherapists have a range of objective outcome measures we can use to assess a patient's condition/function before and after treatment. Plus, word-of-mouth referrals, and having Veterinarians that are confident to refer clients to me, knowing I will liaise with them as needed.

What drives you towards professional excellence? Overall, it's about animal welfare. The best job I can do to support an animal, giving them the best possible quality of life with whatever musculoskeletal or neurological condition they have. I have to be confident that I did the highest training and everything I could.

What is the toughest decision you've had to make in the last few months? That's easy; having to stop all face-to-face appointments for animals during the Coronavirus pandemic. I have to protect the public, so am avoiding going into peoples' homes or yards, and offering online video consultations instead. I've been redeployed to the wards in an acute hospital for my NHS role, so I have to be extra careful to protect human patients.

What is the most challenging aspect of your role? The human aspect! I've only ever wanted to work with animals, so making the decision to become a Chartered Physiotherapist before specialising in Veterinary, has involved over a decade of sacrifice. Working in hospitals, doing rotations and generally working with the public ALL DAY is really tough, but it's been worth it to gain the knowledge and experience I can apply to animals.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your role? Definitely seeing my patients get better. Depending on what was wrong, it's usually a gradual improvement in function and/or gait, so videos before and after show the difference to owners. But sometimes there is an immediate improvement, shown by posture + behaviour; often owners report their dog suddenly wanted to play again (when they hadn't picked up a toy for months) and wag their tail so much more!

What do you feel are the most critical success factors for your industry? I think this is to do with educating the public and Veterinarians. If they all see and understand that physio is a real health profession, using evidence-based practice, assessment skills and working as a team with vets, we can change the perception of being just a complementary therapy giving a bit of massage.

What is the biggest story in your industry at the moment? Unfortunately, the Coronavirus pandemic has forced a lot of Vet Physios to close their businesses until lockdown measures are lifted. However, ACPAT Physios have been really supporting each other and we are all insured to provide teleconsultations, so our clients can still receive advice and progress exercise programmes.

What advice would you give to a new Physiotherapist? Provided they are a qualified Physiotherapist (i.e. human), the extra degree is seriously hard work but then treating animals is so much easier than humans! As long as you have good clinical reasoning and musculoskeletal assessment skills, treating animals is just the same but so much more rewarding because they get better a lot quicker than humans.

JUST FOR FUN...

- **The hobby that I could never give up is...** horse riding
- **I love...** the sound of horses munching
- **My favourite cuisine is...** English (especially traditional puddings)
- **I am afraid of...** losing my mobility, sight or hands, so not being able to do animal physio
- **I've always wanted to be...** able to play electric guitar
- **My guilty pleasure is...** singing my heart out while driving
- **An activity on my bucket list is...** a riding holiday in Chile
- **I asked a friend to describe me and he/she said...** hard-working, determined, approachable
- **I once volunteered at...** a local riding school for 12 years, every single weekend
- **I find most attractive in a person is...** honesty, humour, selflessness

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ZITA WELLS

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#WeSupportAshdownForest
#BetterTogether

ASHDOWN UNLEASHED (Healthy, Happy Pets Social Walk)



We've now held two successful **ASHDOWN UNLEASHED** walks on Ashdown Forest and I was thrilled to welcome the highly experienced Susan Gammage (canine, feline & equine behavioural consultant) and Ciara Gaisher (human & animal physio) to be on hand to answer questions.

Truffle, Ruffs, Marni, Poppy, Luna, Forrest, Olly, Pippi and Winnie were accompanied by their wonderful owners and here's just a snippet of what they had to say...

"Thank you for inviting me, I thoroughly enjoyed it! You created a wonderful experience for dog walkers and those local to the forest. The group were absolutely lovely and the dogs were so easy to walk together."



"I enjoyed the walk, thank you. Such a beautiful part of the forest and lovely to see all the dogs running around and enjoying themselves."

"It was great to meet you and all the gorgeous dogs. We really enjoyed the walk. I would definitely like to join you on another."

"I had so much fun walking and chatting to new people. Would love to join the next walk. Woof, woof!"

And we don't just talk about dogs... Honest!

Here's just a selection of topics we covered on our last walk:

- Careers and professions
- Financial stability & independence for women
- Mortgages
- Maternity leave
- Pensions

Then, of course, we talked about animals!

- Rescuing / rehoming a dog
- The difference of working with dogs & horses
- Allergies in dogs & humans
- Dog groomers
- Beach walks with dogs
- Recall training
- Conservation work on Ashdown Forest
- Exmoor Ponies

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#WeSupportAshdownForest

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LAUNCHING THE ASHDOWN FOREST FOUNDATION

We appreciate all the support so many of you give us whether by volunteering, through donations or supporting events. Thank you!

In 2020 we are launching The Ashdown Forest Foundation, the charitable arm of the Conservators of Ashdown Forest. Its aim is to fundraise to ensure the best possible future for the Forest, supporting the Conservators who have been caring for the Forest since 1885. They protect and care for this rare habitat and its endangered wildlife, to improve biodiversity and bio-abundance. We aim to conserve this beautiful landscape for public enjoyment and recreation, which improves the quality of life and well-being in the community.

Our 2020 car window sticker celebrating the launch of The Ashdown Forest Foundation is now available with a £25.00 donation at the Ashdown Forest Centre and online at <https://www.ashdownforest.org/store/>.

Ashdown Forest is a unique and very special place for residents, local communities and visitors - 6,500 acres of protected heathland and woodland, paths, rides and trails, hidden gardens, waterfalls, streams and magnificent views to the North and South Downs.

The most recent Visitor Survey (pre the Coronavirus Pandemic) estimated that there were 4541 visits per day to Ashdown Forest with just a small staff team, supported by teams of volunteers, who work to manage the forest as an amenity and place of resort and to conserve it as a quiet and natural area of outstanding beauty. Local residents also tell us they would like to show their appreciation for this wonderful resource on their doorstep. There are lots of ways in which you can help, here are just a few:

Corporate volunteering

We can always use teams of volunteers to help us preserve the Forest. Activities include a variety of heathland and woodland habitat maintenance. Coppicing woodland, clearing Pine and Birch scrub and removing invasive species like Rhododendron, then a bonfire. A volunteering day on the Forest is a change of scene and a great team building activity. A group of 15 volunteers can achieve a huge amount in 5 hours. You can download our Corporate Volunteering Application Form here:

<https://www.ashdownforest.org/management/docs/CorporateVolunteeringApplicationForm.pdf>.

Corporate fundraising

If your organisation is interested in providing financial support for environmental causes and helping environmental philanthropy, you might consider adopting Ashdown Forest as your cause of the Year. Corporate sponsorship is the perfect opportunity to become involved with Ashdown Forest and our local community. Businesses can contribute to their corporate social responsibility and support this community asset.

There are opportunities to sponsor:

- The Ashdown Forest ranger vehicles
- The Education Programme
- Communication equipment
- The Forest car parks
- Our Grazing Programme
- IT infrastructure
- Volunteer uniform and equipment
- Our Forest Centre events
- Areas of woodland

A partnership with Ashdown Forest is a two-way street. Your organisation will receive valuable exposure, plenty of publicity and the appreciation of our Forest supporters. It is the perfect opportunity to align our environmental brand with your corporate values and goals. Supporting Ashdown Forest is also a chance to mitigate negative impacts (CO2 emissions) and improve the environment for future generations. More information here <https://www.ashdownforest.org/management/docs/CorporateFundraisingv3.pdf>.

Gifts in memory

The Memorial Programme allows local residents and visitors to make a donation in memory of a loved one to fund the conservation of Ashdown Forest. Donations from this programme will help to maintain and enhance the Forest's natural beauty as a lasting and fitting tribute to the family member or friend who enjoyed visiting the Forest.

Currently we have opportunities to sponsor memorial lecterns, bridges, cairns, clump signs, gates, styles and picnic tables at the Forest Centre. The Lecterns and the Gates require a £2000 donation. Cairns require a £1500 donation. You can see examples of the Lecterns with a memorial plaque at Friends and Hollies car parks. The gates have space for a memorial plaque either on the gate itself or on the gate post. For more information email conservators@ashdownforest.org.



MR FLIX

"Pet Patrol 365 is more than just a service, it's Zita's commitment to her clients that separates Pet Patrol 365 from all the rest!"...

"We moved to West Sussex in 2015 and one of our priorities was to find a trustworthy, reliable pet sitter who was also liked by our beloved cat, Mr Flix. Having carried out an online search we discovered Pet Patrol 365, which reassuringly was accompanied with a recommendation from a local Veterinary Practice, also researched diligently. An initial email enquiry to Pet Patrol 365 led to a home visit by Zita Wells, and the start of a longstanding and much cherished bond between Zita and Mr Flix.

From the outset, Zita offered the reassurance of someone who was genuinely interested in learning about what made Mr Flix tick. She took the time to find out about his history, his daily routine, favourite toys, preferred ways to socialise and general likes and dislikes. Leaving Mr Flix at home alone for the first time was heart wrenching for us, but Zita made the separation bearable with regular text messages and photos. Now when we are away, the daily Zita and Mr Flix posts bring humour and comfort to us when we are apart.

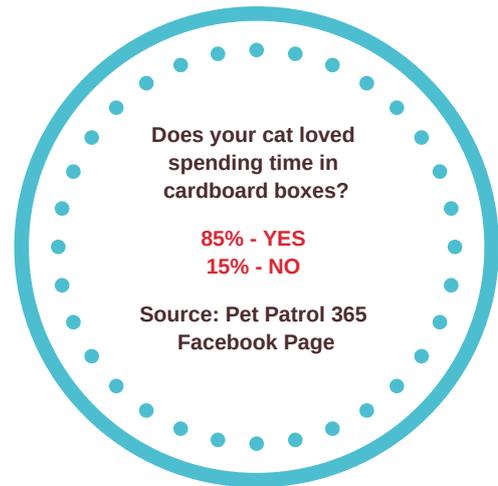
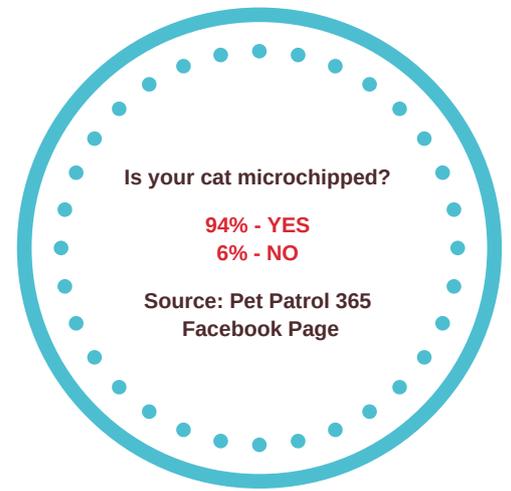
Today, Pet Patrol 365 allows us the flexibility to choose the visits which best suit Mr Flix's temperament and needs, all requested and confirmed by return email, usually within a day. It is a credit to Zita that she will also regularly seek feedback from her clients on how she can improve the services she offers.

Zita has been our pet sitter for nearly five years now and we can't imagine life without her - neither can Mr. Flix! Pet Patrol 365 is more than just a service, it's Zita's commitment to her clients that separates Pet Patrol 365 from all the rest!"

Owners of Mr Flix, East Grinstead

Paws for Thought...

"Some people talk to animals. Not many listen though. That's the problem." - **A.A. Milne**



Hoping to jet off somewhere special?

If you are looking to get away and want to leave your cat in the comfort of your own home, then Pet Patrol 365 can help make this decision (and holiday) hassle free!



Multi Award Winning Pet Business
Est. Over 16 Years
Unrivalled Professionalism & Expertise
Insured, CRB Checked
Vet & Owner References
COVID19 Safety & Hygiene Protocols & Processes

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RHEA CUTMORE

CLOUD NINE K9's SCENTWORK & SEARCH DOGS

07525 723459

<https://www.cloudninek9s.co.uk>



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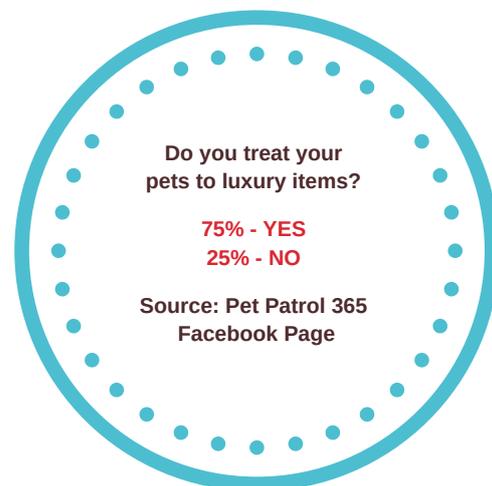
SCENTWORK FOR PET DOGS - WHY IS EVERYONE RAVING ABOUT IT?



SCENTWORK

Scentwork for pet dogs has massively increased in popularity in the last few years and here's why... Not only is it super fun for both dogs and owners but also because it's an all inclusive sport/activity. It doesn't matter if you have a Great Dane or a Chihuahua, a puppy or a golden oldie, super fit or physically impaired in some way... Every dog can take part!

Comments such as "Oh my dog wouldn't be any good, isn't that only for police dog type breeds?" is a common misconception and many police/military/customs forces across the world are now using a larger variety of breeds for their sniffer dogs.



If your dog can sniff then they can take part in scentwork (whether they be Italian Spinonies, Pomeranians, Whippets, Bull breeds, Poodles and many more), it's all about finding the right motivation and reward for your dog.

Companies such as UK Sniffer Dogs offer classes and workshops for pet dogs and their owners all across the country. This sport is something that can be done just for fun or there are Trials for each level for those who want to compete.

Lots of pet dog owners, although saying they had no experience with any form of scentwork, have been doing it without realising it by playing games like 'hide and seek' and 'find the treat/toy'. Sniffing is a natural behaviour for dogs and they enjoy it! So much so that scenting actually releases Serotonin (the happy hormone), which helps keep them calm and engaged in their surroundings.

Scentwork has many benefits for all types of dog too! It can help build confidence in anxious or reactive dogs. By learning a fun new game it can then be introduced (slowly) into areas where they aren't so confident (such as around people/other dogs on walks/ in built up areas), and because they enjoy it so much the scary things fade to the background. Confidence is built through time, patience and positive association. Of course this isn't a cure but a management tool to help lessen stress and anxiety in these types of dogs.

For young and excitable dogs it can help teach them a focus and slow them down a bit. By encouraging dogs and owners to become methodical searchers, checking out every part of their search area (rather than the usual 'spaniel whirlwind') they understand that if they slow down they will find the scent quicker and, therefore, get their reward quicker.



Scentwork is a great form of mental stimulation too! Ideal for older dogs or those with less physical ability, Did you know that 10-15 minutes of mental stimulation can be the equivalent to an hours physical exercise? Perfect for all involved! Young, old, energetic or injured.

Scentwork is also a great bond building exercise as both dogs and owners have to learn to work together! The dogs learn a new game and how to tell the owner that they have found a specific scent and where it is. The dog also has to learn how to search methodically, identify where the scent is, and then clearly indicate to the owner to get the reward.

The whole family can get involved and children love to jump in and get creative with hiding places. This is the kind of activity you can take anywhere! Even indoors if the glorious British weather turns grey and wet!