

FOR PETS

The magazine for Blue Cross supporters

Spring 2026

Paloma power

Deaf cat defies the odds



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COVER STORY

04 Warrior queen

Feisty feline's incredible recovery from accident



WELCOME

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The UK is in the grip of a pet welfare crisis. With spiralling vet bills and the cost of living tightening its hold, many pets are being left without the care they need. Often, this heartbreaking crisis is hidden from view – and it's charities like Blue Cross picking up the pieces. Take our cover star Paloma, for example. Without our help, the deaf kitten, who was found injured and in pain at the roadside, may not be alive today, causing mischief in a new home. And without months of rehabilitation, former breeding dog Jeremy, who spent 10 years trapped in a concrete kennel, may never have known human love or a comfy bed. Thank you for helping us to be there for them, and for so many other pets in need.

 /thebluecrossUK
 @The_Blue_Cross

FEATURES

08 Rehabilitation

Terrified dog overcomes fears

12 Perfect match

Lonely rabbit finds soulmate

14 Pocket rocket

Tiny Shetland is a showman

20 Amazing Lilly

Blind dog's inspiring journey

24 Super siblings

Abandoned kittens thrive

28 Transformation

Stray puppies unrecognisable

REGULARS

17 Take me home

These Blue Cross pets need a loving family

18 Pet advice

Pets and holidays

27 Pet postbag

Your letters

30 News

The latest Blue Cross news

34 Competition

Win a dog-friendly hotel stay

35 Contact us

Get in touch or come and visit



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Warrior QUEEN

Hit by a car, Paloma's fate was uncertain. But, with Blue Cross by her side, this feisty feline recovered, now reigning over everyone who meets and falls in love with her...

Dove – that's what Paloma's name means in Spanish. It suits her not just because of her shiny white fur but also as, after a tough start, she is now flying high.

Quite literally – her favourite hobby is leaping joyfully to the tallest shelf in the room.

Paloma, who is deaf, came into our animal hospital in Victoria, central London, after being hit by a car.

"She was terrified and in pain," Vicky Ebers, Senior Veterinary Surgeon, says. "Not yet a year old and just two and a half kilos, she'd been hit in the face – her mouth was full of dried blood and dirt."





If Paloma hadn't come through our doors at Victoria, I don't think she'd be alive today. At Blue Cross, we fight for cats like her when nobody else will



The priority was to get Paloma on pain relief and fluids. The vet team then anaesthetised her to flush out, clean and examine her mouth. Her tongue was cut almost in half by the accident and X-rays showed her jaw was broken in several places.

"We stitched her tongue, wired her jaw back together and looped a stitch around her face to keep it in the right position while healing," Vicky says.

"And, as eating was impossible, we placed a feeding tube into her oesophagus through her neck, bypassing her painful mouth.

"After surgery she was so skinny

she couldn't maintain her body temperature, becoming hypothermic.

"We settled her with a heat pad and blankets and monitored her temperature closely overnight."

WEAK

But while Paloma was physically weak, mentally she was a warrior.

Vicky continues: "She was so sorry for herself, attached to the feeding tube and intravenous antibiotic drip.

"But after about 10 days she let me have a cuddle in the mornings.

"Three weeks in she got sassy. 'I want this feeding tube removed

so I can explore,' she was telling me."

It took a month to reach that milestone – then Paloma, lapping up liquidised cat mousses and pastes, went into foster care to convalesce.

Her fosterer, Jane, says: "Poor Paloma was thin with shaved patches all over, scabs around her mouth and nose and a short thick wire sticking out of her chin.

"But I opened her carrier and she was out and about on wobbly legs, exploring almost immediately.

"Every day she grew stronger. She'd missed out on a lot of kittenhood – now she was making up for lost time.



"I'd try and wear her out with fishing rod toys but she'd keep playing, even when her eyes were closing through tiredness. Her favourite trick was scaling my bedroom door and peering triumphantly down at me."

When Paloma returned to Victoria for check-ups, the team were thrilled with her progress.

"She was putting on weight and her jaw was healing nicely," Vicky says.

At the four-week mark the last of the wires in her jaw was removed.

RESILIENCE

Feisty Paloma's resilience had carried

her through – now she deserved to find a loving home.

So she moved to our Southampton rehoming centre where the team has experience with deaf cats. They understood that, while Paloma's deafness makes her vulnerable, as a young, adventurous cat she needed to enjoy the outside world.

"We received lots of applications for Paloma – she's so gorgeous," Leonie Harrison, Adoptions Coordinator at Southampton, says.

"But we had to find the right home. When a man with experience of deaf cats who lives on a quiet estate

beside fields applied, we knew he was the perfect match."

True to form, Paloma's favourite spot is now the highest shelf of a bookcase from where she can peer regally down. And, after a settling-in period indoors, she was out in the garden climbing trees.

But, when the evenings come, she curls up on the sofa, adored – like the queen she is – by her new family.

"If Paloma hadn't come through the doors at Victoria, I don't think she'd be alive today," vet Vicky says. "At Blue Cross we fight for cats like Paloma when nobody else will."

TERRIFIED

of everything

Jeremy was a shutdown, shell of a dog when he arrived at Blue Cross, but with love and patience, he's overcome so much...

From sleeping on straw in a concrete kennel to squishy beds, fireside naps and countryside walks, life now couldn't be more different for Jeremy compared to his first 10 years.

The Ihasa apso arrived at Blue Cross Suffolk from a breeding facility in September 2024 in a terrible state and petrified of people, having never experienced human contact.





His story was so sad, it breaks your heart. We just want to make him happy



He couldn't be touched and was even scared of his food bowl as he'd never had one of his own before. He didn't know what a toy or a comfy bed was, either.

Jeremy was also badly matted and had dental disease, with treatment leaving him with just four teeth.

HEARTBREAKING

Hannah Ward, Rehabilitation Trainer and Behaviour Advisor, says: "Jeremy was in such a sorry state when he first arrived. He was terrified, and we didn't know what the future held for him. It was heartbreaking.

"For the first week or two, he wouldn't move and would shake if someone went into his kennel."

The team took things slowly. The company of other dogs gave him courage to go on walks and, gradually, Jeremy began to relax.

Hannah describes seeing him play with a toy for the first time as a "magical moment". And when he went on a walk without another dog, it was another huge milestone.

And with his confidence growing, Jeremy was placed in foster care to see if he could adapt to pet life.

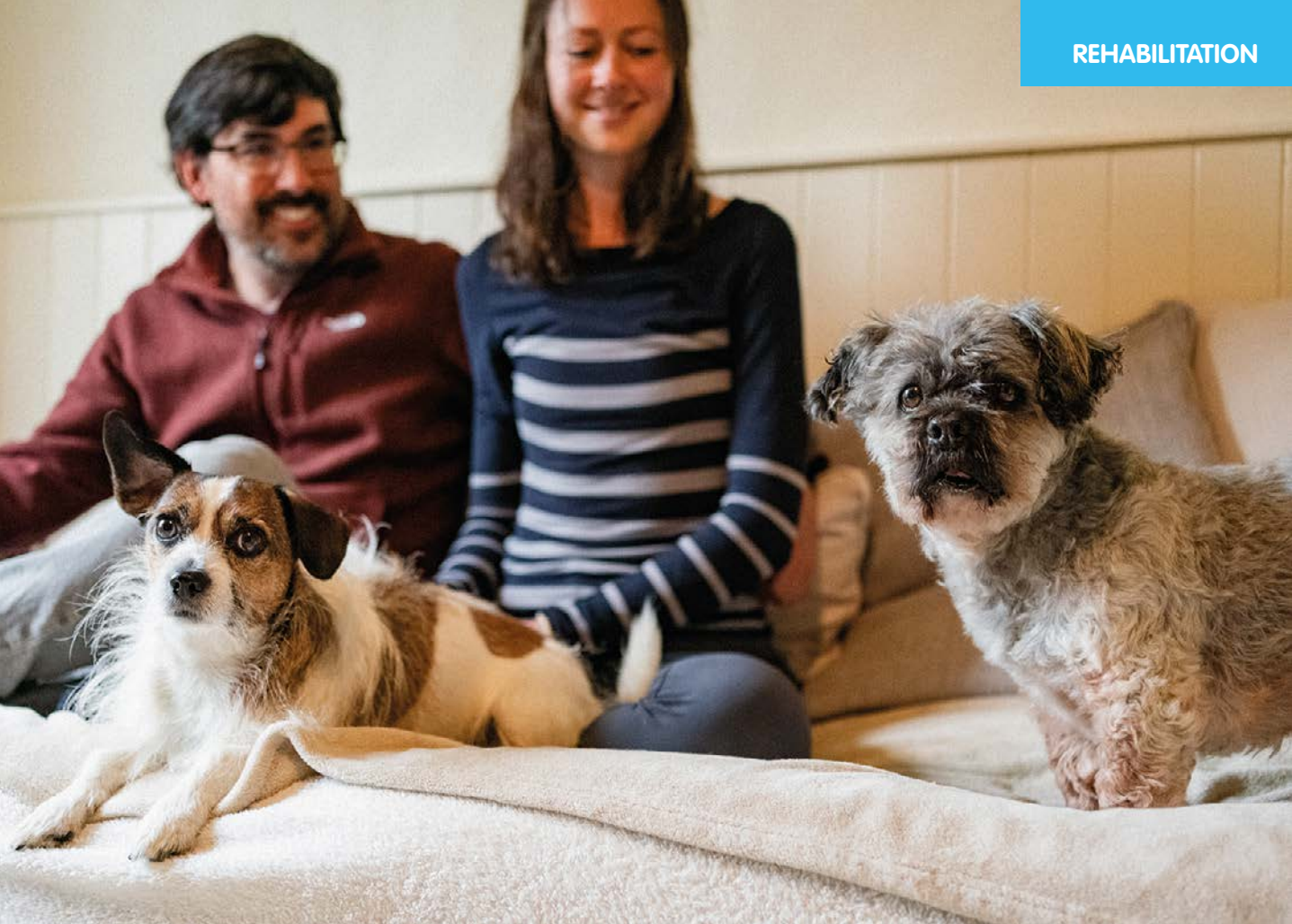
BLOSSOM

Thankfully, he continued to blossom. With the help of freshly cooked chicken, he learnt to approach humans without fear and eventually started to settle in the same room as his foster carer.

Now ready for adoption, finding a home for Jeremy, who may never want to be stroked, was the next big challenge in his journey.

But after more than 200 days in our care, he went to live in Norfolk with Catherine Docherty and Miquel Vall-Ilosera Camps, along with their





18-year-old cat Lucky and fellow rescue dog Bluey, eight.

The couple were certain they could give Jeremy the patient, understanding home he needed after rehabilitating their previous rescue dog, Elliot, who had many challenges.

And Jeremy has thrived. His happy place might still be perched on the end of the sofa, about a metre away from his family and nearest the door. But it's enormous progress for a dog who, until recently, was petrified of being in the same room as people.

"He still likes to have his exit clear," says Catherine. "But at the start, he wouldn't choose to be with us. He was terrified of everything."

While he doesn't seek out fuss – and probably never will – Jeremy can now be touched on cue and copes with being groomed. On one occasion, he has even curled up on Catherine's lap for a snooze.

Miquel says: "He's progressed so much faster than we expected. Everything is a victory, like the first time he went up the stairs, the first time he jumped on the sofa, and the first time he got on the bed."

LIFESTYLE COACH

Bluey, who is described as Jeremy's "lifestyle coach", has been instrumental in building his confidence. By his side, Jeremy has

even enjoyed long mountain hikes on holiday in Scotland.

"If he's got Bluey with him, then he's happy," says Catherine. "He's Bluey's little sidekick."

Jeremy's transformation is remarkable, and Catherine and Miquel couldn't be prouder of him.

Catherine says: "His story was so sad, it breaks your heart. We just want to make him happy.

"And he makes us smile a lot. Either because he's achieved something new, or because he's just done something funny."

She adds: "Jeremy proves that, with patience, things can change. There's no lost cause."

Lonely bunny FINDS LOVE

Blue Cross matches partially-sighted Caramel with the perfect home – and a handsome husband...

Caramel the rabbit is as sweet as her name but she's made of strong stuff too.

The six-year-old harlequin lop arrived at Blue Cross Burford after her owner passed away.

"We realised she was having trouble navigating her pen," Anouska Ashmead-Bartlett, Admissions Coordinator, says. "And she got spooked when we approached, only recognising us after a sniff."

An examination by the vet team confirmed that Caramel had very limited vision.

"We adapted her pen," Anouska says. "And we chatted to her non-stop so she recognised our voices and always knew where we were in her space."

"She was brave – not being able to see but adjusting to this new environment. Nice veggies helped and soon she bounced over to us for lots of interaction."

What Caramel really needed, though, was a cuddle from another bunny – rabbits are social animals and Blue Cross believes they should live with a companion of their own



“
Caramel was clueless
about dating
”

kind. But, as this would be a new experience for lifetime singleton Caramel, the bonding process could be long and complicated further by her limited vision.

A big commitment for potential adopters but Pippa Adamson, who spotted Caramel's rehoming profile online, was undaunted.

She says: "My bunny Matt had lost his 'wife' two months earlier. Matt's a gentle soul and half Caramel's size.

"I thought he'd be perfect for her – non-threatening and kind.

"But poor Caramel was clueless about dating. I did everything right – short, supervised stretches together in neutral territory. But Caramel didn't know how to respond to Matt's displays of affection."

So Pippa contacted Stacey, one of Caramel's carers at Burford, for advice. With the Christmas holidays approaching Stacey suggested the 24/7 bunny bonding method – supervising Caramel and Matt for the longest stretches possible.

"My son Tom – also a rabbit lover – and I set their pen up in the kitchen and watched them while we played board games at the table," Pippa says. "Caramel's record was ignoring Matt for 10 solid hours."

But, as the days passed, she moved closer to him. And, finally, two months after their first date, Caramel licked Matt's ears – the rabbit equivalent of Ross and Rachel's first kiss in TV show *Friends*.

"Matt was overjoyed," Pippa says.

So were the Blue Cross team at Burford. Congratulations Caramel – love always wins in the end.





Tiny DANCER

For Elton John the miniature Shetland,
life's a stage and he's the star...

Pocket rocket man – that's Elton John. But the four-year-old, who stands at 8HH (about 2.5 feet), wasn't always such a ball of energy.

When Elton arrived at Blue Cross rehoming centre in Rolleston, Staffordshire, he was just a baby. He'd been rescued by the RSPCA, along with four other Shetlands, from poor living conditions. Underweight and withdrawn, he sucked his tongue to comfort himself.

The Rolleston team put Elton on a feed plan and, slowly, gained his trust so they could catch and handle him. Then, after being castrated, he went on foster to Derby College where Sally Foscett, manager of the equestrian centre, met him.

"We fostered Elton as a companion to our elderly Shetland pony Jim," Sally, who now works for Blue Cross as Rehoming Operations Manager in Horse Services, says. "He was very shy but over time, he gained confidence from Jim. Watching him taking part in lessons and getting lots of attention, Elton thought: 'I'll have some of that'. So, in the arena with students, he clowned around."

SHOWMAN

Elton the showman was born. But his antics didn't delight everyone – Jim grew fed up with this young upstart stealing the limelight.

So Blue Cross put Elton up for rehoming through our Home Direct scheme, meaning he could stay at the college until his perfect home was found. It wasn't far away.

"When I saw this angelic little face on Blue Cross horse borrowers Facebook page, my heart melted," Charlotte Bird, who lives close to the college, says.

Charlotte, 26, was just nine when her mum adopted Blue Cross pony Woody, a native New Forest type, for her in 2009. They've been best friends ever since. And, in the past few years she's adopted Blue Cross miniature Shetlands Rusty and Ronnie.

"I couldn't understand why Sally had warned me Elton could be cheeky as he hopped out of the horsebox at my yard – so calm, as if he'd lived here all his life," Charlotte says "But, later, he ducked under a fence to introduce himself to a bemused Rusty and Ronnie – so much for a slow introduction."



CHEEKY

"But, I've realised, you can't contain Elton. It's his world and we're all just living in it.

"He breaks into the hayshed, getting stuck because he can't turn round in there. I'm on my knees trying to groom him – suddenly he's sitting on my lap. On the track system I've set up for the Shetlands, Elton thinks he's a racehorse – Rusty and Ronnie aren't allowed to overtake. To them, Elton's that annoying kid in school who's always showing off. I can't disagree but he's so funny."

Elton certainly performed on the day of our photoshoot – rolling, zooming and prancing up to our photographer for his close-up. For an encore, he gave Woody, contentedly munching grass, a playful nudge on the bottom.

"That boof on the bum is Elton's signature move," Charlotte laughs. "He even did it to me once. He's thriving on all this attention and the opportunity to show off – it's his perfect day."

“

Elton thinks he's a racehorse – Rusty and Ronnie aren't allowed to overtake. To them, Elton's that annoying kid in school who's always showing off

”



Adoption

Could you take me home?



These wonderful pets are in search of a second chance

Rory

When my owner died, I found myself here at Blue Cross. Everyone is so kind but I'm getting sad saying goodbye to my field friends when they get adopted. I long to make companions for life in a new home.

Rolleston, 0300 777 1846



Moses

Well, hello there. I'm a sophisticated gentleman who is ready to enjoy life's simple pleasures in a calm home. At 14 years young, I know exactly what I want – fuss, a warm lap to nap on and an outdoor space to explore.

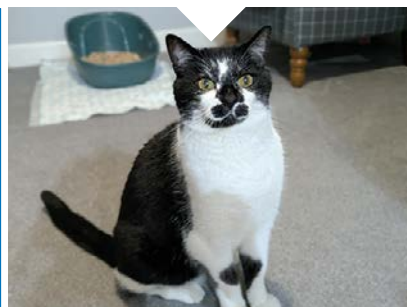
Devon, 0300 777 1853



Luna

They call me a kangaroo as running super fast and bouncing really high is my speciality! I'm looking for a new family with plenty of energy to match my own. I promise to give lots of cuddles in between our walkies.

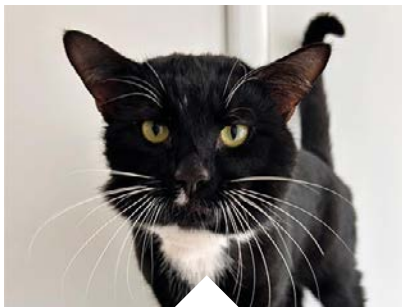
Hertfordshire, 0300 777 1844



Mars

After a hectic life on the racetrack, I'm looking for a home to call my own. I dream of days filled with sniffing and pottering about, followed by a quick zoomie and a long nap on a squishy bed or sofa with my favourite person.

Hertfordshire, 0300 777 1844



Vimto

You'll be glad to know I'm as sweet as my name suggests! I started life confined to a small cage with lots of other hamsters, so it feels so good to have all the space and food I need now. All that's missing is a new home.

Manchester, 0300 777 1852



Norman

I'm a chatty, happy and friendly boy with a big heart that's just longing to love a new family. Life has been tough lately – I was found as a stray and injured, but I'm so glad these kind folk at Blue Cross took me in.

Hertfordshire, 0300 777 1844

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

Pets and holidays

MAKING THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOUR PET

TAKING YOUR PET ON HOLIDAY

Bringing your dog on your travels is a great way to make new memories! If you're planning to involve them, here are our top tips for a smooth trip.

Check pet paperwork

If you're going abroad, check that your pet's paperwork and vaccinations for travel are all up to date before you go.

Find a local vet

In case of an emergency, it's a good idea to find a vet local to where you and your pet are staying. Make a note of their contact information.

Keep cool

If you're making the journey by car, take care that your dog does not overheat. Ensure there is plenty of ventilation and never leave your pet in the car unattended.

Update your details

Wherever you are going, ensure the details on your dog's microchip and ID tag are up to date. This will help in the event of your pet getting lost.

Camping

Before you take your pet camping, it's a good idea to get them used to the tent. Set it up in the garden and give them lots of praise for calm behaviour around the tent. At the campsite, be extra careful of livestock nearby, and keep your dog on a lead if needed.

What to pack for your pet

- Food and water, including a water bottle for walks and travel
- First aid kit and any medication
- ID tag for collar or harness
- A lead, longline and harness
- Bedding and blankets
- Toys, treats and chews
- Dog sunscreen
- Tick remover
- A windbreak for privacy and shade
- If travelling by car, ensure you have a crash-tested harness or crate





Illustrations by Perched Bird

LEAVING YOUR PET AT HOME

Sometimes, it's not the right decision to take your pet on holiday with you. Trusting someone to look after them can be tough, but you'll have peace of mind if you do your research first. Here's a few options for ensuring your pet is well looked after while you're away on holiday.

Friends and family

Leaving your pet with friends or family is a great option, especially if your pet is already familiar with them.

Pet sitters

These are people who live in your home and look after your pet while you're away, for a fee. Make sure you meet the sitter first and that they are insured and DBS checked.

Boarding facilities

Home boarders and boarding kennels can look after your pet either in their

home or at a dedicated site. Good places book up fast, so start your search in plenty of time.

Vital info to share

No matter which option you choose, you'll need to let your pet's carer know:

- Your local vet's details
- Any pre-existing medical conditions and medication
- Who to call in an emergency
- Your pet's usual feeding time
- Their exercise routine
- Any behavioural issues that they will need to be aware of

More advice at bluecross.org.uk/petholidays

NAVIGATING the world

A puppy who arrived in Blue Cross care blind and bewildered is living proof of the extraordinary things that disabled pets can achieve...







Seeing Lilly zoom around her garden, chasing her ball with a wagging tail and leaping over her canine brother when he's in her way, you would never guess what makes her so unique.

"People can't believe she's blind," says Molly Banner, who adopted the sable cocker spaniel with partner Tom Amy last year. And this is what makes her all the more remarkable.

Lilly arrived at Blue Cross Burford in Oxfordshire as a tiny puppy last year after her breeder realised she was born blind and asked us to find her the special home she would need.

Not only was Lilly unable to see, but she was also tiny for her age – weighing 2kg at a tender five weeks

old – as well as being very lethargic and withdrawn, resulting in an urgent vet admission.

After two days of intravenous fluids, she was bouncing back – but vets confirmed she had no vision or hope of gaining any in either eye.

OVERWHELMED

Understandably, Lilly was feeling overwhelmed and had an uncertain future ahead.

It was vital to get her straight into foster care, and Leanne Fadden, Rehabilitation and Behaviour Advisor, stepped in to provide the expert support and stability Lilly so desperately needed.

Verbal cues helped the worried

puppy understand everything happening to and around her, while a network of textured mats enabled her to find her way around the house.

At first, nervous Lilly was so dependent on Leanne that she would whimper when she sensed her move more than a couple of metres away.

But within a couple of weeks, her confidence had soared, and an exuberant puppy with a big personality emerged. It was a remarkable transformation.

Leanne says: "Training her was fun and very rewarding. Seeing her get on with life despite her disability was quite incredible to watch. She's an amazing little dog."

Amazing Lilly has continued to



exceed all expectations with her loving family in the New Forest.

CLIMBING MOUNTAINS

She is soon set to conquer Wales's highest peak, Yr Wyddfa – also known as Snowdon – to raise money for Blue Cross. It won't be the first mountain she has climbed either.

At home, she no longer needs mats to navigate – and can even sniff out her favourite octopus toy from room to room.

She explores the garden with ease, knowing her best friend – five-year-old dachshund Barry – is never far from her side. He has been instrumental in building her ever-growing confidence.

"Lilly is the sister Barry loves but didn't know he wanted. They love being out in the garden together, wandering around sniffing everything," says Molly, who runs her beauty business from home, meaning sociable Lilly meets new people nearly every day.

EXCELLING

In training, Lilly has excelled too – mastering commands from 'playing dead' to 'spinning'. Tom has invested lots of time teaching Lilly this impressive repertoire of tricks.

He says: "She's just so clever, which has made it a lot easier for me.

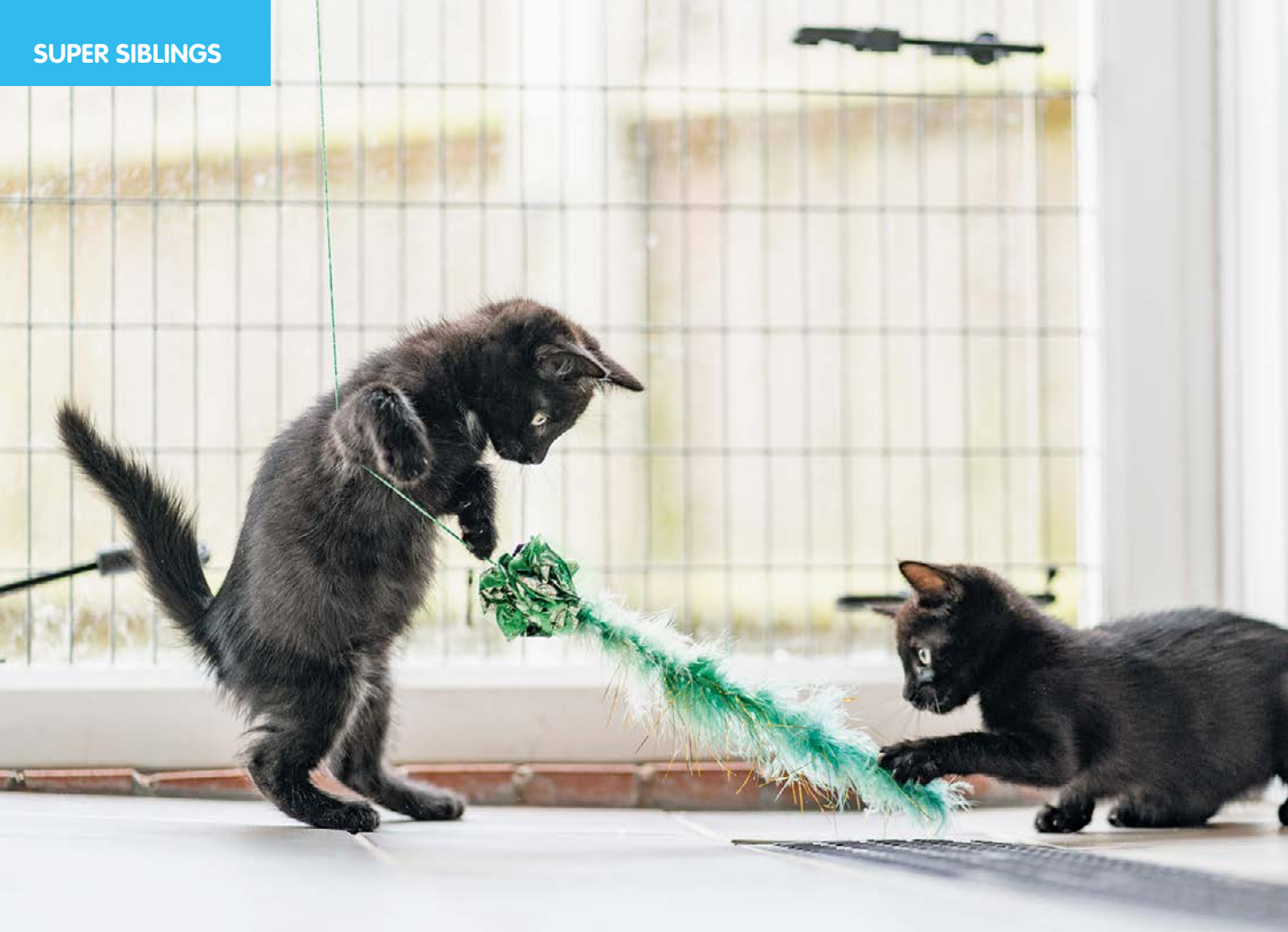
"To see how far she's come is really rewarding. It has been very special."

"We're so proud of her and what she's achieved," continues Molly.

"We didn't really know what to expect – we thought she'd be a dog that wouldn't really be able to go out and about to new places much or socialise like other dogs. But she's exceeded anything that we could have imagined."

Outdoor lovers Molly and Tom thought they would need to tone down their adventures when adopting Lilly, but the reality is quite the opposite – it encourages them to get out even more. Weekends are now often spent on long hikes.

Molly adds: "She has been the best addition to our family; we can't imagine not having her."



Source of **STRENGTH**

Forsaken kittens were each other's light in the darkness as Blue Cross lit their path to a happy future...

Found abandoned in a cardboard box in a McDonald's car park, two tiny black kittens snuggled together for comfort. Just a few weeks old, they were starving and riddled with fleas. It was a terrible start in life – but they had each other.

And they had Blue Cross. A kind animal lover took them to our Bromsgrove rehoming centre in

Worcestershire knowing we would nurse them back to health and find them a loving family together.

At first the kittens, named Ronald and Rosie, were withdrawn, hiding when a member of our team approached. Then we noticed they loved batting a ball, so we joined in their games to build their confidence around us.

After being treated for fleas,

vaccinated, microchipped and neutered, we posted Ronald and Rosie's photographs on the adoption pages of our website. That's where Lydia Blundell from Cheltenham spotted them.

Soon she and her partner Sha were welcoming the kittens to their new home and their new Hobbit-inspired names – Ronald became Merry and Rosie Pippin.



““

They are so close, playing football and hide and seek all day. Then, at night, they curl up and spoon together

””

SUPER-CURIOS

“I’d expected them to be nervous and hide but the Blue Cross team in Bromsgrove had done a great job socialising them,” Lydia says.

“Merry especially was super-curious and into everything – all the toys, tunnels and climbing frames we’d bought for their arrival.

“They love tuna and chicken and when they eat something new they make this appreciative growl that’s as loud as a foghorn.

“I look at Pippin and think: how can such a tiny little girl produce this big booming noise?”

And Pippin has first-time pet parent Sha wound around her little paw.



“Pippin gazes at Sha adoringly and he hops in the car to the pet shop to buy her another toy,” Lydia laughs.

“He says he doesn’t know how he ever lived in a house without pets as they are little rays of sunshine.”

And, just as they sustained each

other through the bad times, super-siblings Merry and Pippin are sharing the good ones too.

“They are so close, playing football and hide and seek all day,” Lydia says. “Then, at night, they curl up and spoon together.”



Walk, skip, or dance your way across 100k this June...



As the cost of living skyrockets, it's easy to despair – why not spring into action instead? Walk, skip, or dance your way across 100k this June, and you can make a real difference to some of the UK's most vulnerable pets – and people too – right when they need it most.

Steps for Pets is our walking challenge to raise money for sick, injured and homeless pets and the people who love them. We're setting the challenge to walk 100km between 1 - 30 June. That's 4,700 steps a day to help feed 100 pets! You can track your amazing progress across the month through your fundraising page.

SIGN-UP OPENS 27 APRIL

email paws2play@bluecross.org.uk to register your interest

Join in the fun and help us change the lives of sick, injured and homeless pets by hosting your own Paws for Tea party.

Paws for Tea is such a great way to raise money for vulnerable pets. So, pick a date and gather family, friends or colleagues together for a cuppa and a slice of cake. Whether you want to organise a big do in the office, or a small gathering in your front room or garden, you'll find everything you need to host the purrfect tea party inside your free paws for tea fundraising pack.



Every sip changes lives



To order your pack visit: bluecross.org.uk/paws4tea

Letters



We love to hear from you

Send us your news and pictures of your pets!

CONSTANT COMPANION

I adopted Felix from your Oxford branch when he was a kitten of just nine months. He is now 15 and has been my constant companion all these years.

He has been an absolute delight, and I don't know what I would do without him.

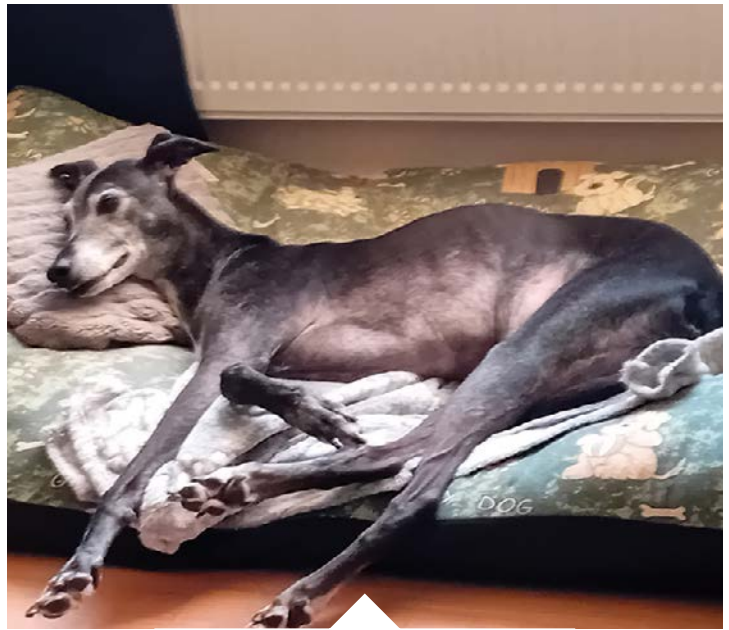
As you can see, he is very spoiled, and he loves his brushes in the morning.

He has the bushiest, longest tail and lovely tufts of hair on all his paws.

I am sure that somewhere he has a little Maine coon in him. I thought you would like to see him after 15 years. I had just lost my husband and Felix brought me some comfort and a little creature always there to come home to.

Thank you Blue Cross.

Norma King



BEAUTIFUL GOOSE

Just a little picture of someone you might remember – Goose the Gamekeeper, living his life to the full. He's been for his walk and is shattered now, so having a well-deserved rest.

We got him from Blue Cross Thirsk when he was three years old, and he'll be 11 years old in April. Goose has been a fantastic part of all our family.

Our great granddaughter, Nevaeh, absolutely loves him and vice versa – they're best friends. He greets everyone that comes in the house, and he's also grown up with our grandchildren. He is loved by all the family.

Considering nobody knew what he was like, he's turned out to be a beautiful, loving pet.

John T Korczynski



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** (/thebluecrossUK) and **X** (@The_Blue_Cross)



SAVED from the brink

Three neglected puppies who arrived at our doors weak, bald and terrified are now living life to the full after an incredible transformation...

Who could have left them in such a terrible state? Starving with red-raw skin and bellies swollen with worms, Zac, Isaac and Taylor were abandoned when they needed love the most.

The lurcher siblings were found fighting to survive as strays when they were just eight weeks old, and it's unlikely they would have clung to life much longer had they not been saved.

Sarcoptic mange – the type carried by foxes – had ravaged their delicate puppy skin, leaving them practically bald, itchy, and sore. Parasitic worms and malnutrition had also left them dangerously weak.

After beginning treatment – including medication and soothing baths – with the dog warden, the littermates arrived at our Bromsgrove rehoming centre in Worcestershire to start their rehabilitation journey.



BEFORE

MALNOURISHED

Assistant Manager, Saffron Parry, says: "When they arrived, they still had bellies swollen with worms and were very malnourished due to a lack of food before they were rescued. They were all really scabby and uncomfortable as well."

As mange is very contagious, Zac, Isaac and Taylor needed to be kept in isolation – with a small circle of carers wearing protective clothing, who weren't in contact with other pets.

It made it more challenging to mend the psychological damage caused by the siblings' ordeal.

"All three were quite worried by

people," says Saffron. "It took a little bit of time for them to warm up to us."

She continues: "In isolation, we kept a routine and opened up their world slowly and kept it quite small.

"We gave them access to different things gradually, including lots of training with collars and leads to prepare them for future walks.

"And they had activities to keep their brains entertained. We don't think they'd ever had toys before."

RAMBUNCTIOUS

The siblings quickly settled in and learned to trust their carers, emerging from isolation after three weeks as

rambunctious and confident puppies with shiny coats of fur. They were unrecognisable – and unstoppable.

"They're wild – typical young lurcher puppies – energetic and causing lots of mischief," laughs Saffron, as Zac and Isaac enjoy zoomies in the centre's grassy puppy paddock.

She adds: "Three weeks in isolation isn't very long in the grand scheme of things, but for puppies it's such a vital period of learning, so they did really well considering how small their world was during that time."

It wasn't long before all three found new homes, where they're now enjoying life as much-loved pets.

News

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All the latest news from Blue Cross



the finder said she also had plastic string-like material around her mouth and gums.”

Our vets gave the two-year-old white cat a health check and found her to have early-stage gum disease and tartar build-up, but she was otherwise healthy.

We gave Blanche a dental under anaesthetic and spayed her at the same time. She was also microchipped and given all the routine parasite treatments and vaccinations she needed to begin a happy and healthy life.

Blanche then went into foster care to continue her recovery. After 49 days with Blue Cross, the sweet girl found the loving home she deserved and is now known as Tooty.

Left in a BIN

Bundled up in bubble wrap and left in a bin, Blanche so nearly died suffering.

We can only imagine that the string that was also found tied around her little mouth was to muffle her desperate cries for help.

Thankfully, someone heard her in distress and brought her to the safety of our Victoria animal hospital in central London. Without them, it's unlikely Blanche would have survived.

Amanda Rumball, London Welfare Officer, says: “Blanche was found crying and distraught in a bin. She had been wrapped in bubble wrap, and

CONFIDENT

New owner, Ana Murta of London, says: “She is a confident little cat now. In the beginning, she was still uncertain about accepting cuddles and how much she could trust people again. She would show us when she'd had enough.

Ana continues: “She was also not very confident in adventuring in the garden when we started letting her explore after a month.

“But slowly by slowly, she realised this is a safe home, and she became confident going out and happily returning as she pleases.”

HAMSTER PUP IS SAFE NOW

Tiny Snowdrop was born a few days after his mother arrived in Blue Cross care.

Mum was one of 500 hamsters discovered in a home in South Wales, many injured and some, like Snowdrop's mother, pregnant. Sadly, many had also passed away.

Blue Cross offered to help 78 of the hamsters – and two mice – by finding foster homes for them across our sites.

Snowdrop was fostered by Katy Young, who says: “He was like a little ball of cotton wool when he arrived inside his huge enclosure, which I placed inside our summerhouse.”

After 143 days in our care, he was adopted.





MUM AND PUPPIES SPREAD JOY

Two-year-old Dumpling had a few little dumplings of her own on the way when she came into Blue Cross care – she was heavily pregnant.

So the team at Blue Cross Devon rehoming, advice and behaviour unit placed her in a specialist volunteer foster home with a vet.

She gave birth to six puppies days later – a large litter for a Chihuahua.

Dumpling was a devoted – albeit exhausted mum – and the pups thrived, each developing their own personalities. Gizmo, for example, was very confident, while her brother Potato was shy, taking his lead from his siblings.

COMPANION

Gizmo is now called Mabel. Her adopter Gillian Boulos says: “Mabel’s tiny in stature but big in personality – very playful, inquisitive, funny and affectionate. She is the perfect little companion, loving nothing more than to curl up on my lap for a cuddle.”

Dumpling, as well as her five other puppies, also got the loving homes and happy endings they deserved.

A TAIL TO TELL

Losing most of his tail isn’t holding ‘gymnast’ cat Pepper back.

Part of his tail was amputated while in his previous home, but when he came to Blue Cross Hertfordshire, the bone and tissue were visible inside.

So, Pepper, eight, went to our Victoria animal hospital in central London for surgery to amputate more of the tail, which had also become infected.

Hollie De Almeida, Pet Welfare Assistant at Blue Cross Hertfordshire, says: “We were all worried about how the surgery would affect his personality and his balance.

“But, even wearing a cone, he was much more confident when he returned to us after surgery – we think he must have been in pain.”

Hollie adds: “And, despite his stub of a tail – he only has about four inches left – his balance was perfect. He jumped onto the shelves in his kennel like a gymnast.”

After 79 days in Blue Cross care, this sweet boy found a loving home to call his own.



MUM AND KITTENS SAFE

She was barely out of kittenhood herself but when North fell pregnant, her maternal instincts kicked in.

Seeking a safe space to give birth to her three kittens, she entered a home through an open window, before being brought to Blue Cross.

The whole family were treated for fleas at Victoria and then moved to our Suffolk rehoming centre.

Clare Williamson, Assistant Manager at Suffolk, says: “North was really chilled and a great mum to her little girls.”

North’s daughters – Hamish, Nessie and Bonnie Lass – were neutered and adopted, and their mum soon found a loving home of her own as well.





Whatever happened to?

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



TINSEL

Tinsel's festive name might have been changed to Alfie, but he's still bringing plenty of joy to his new family a year on.

He was lucky to be born in the safety of our Hertfordshire centre after mum Elphaba – one of the stars of our 2025 Christmas appeal – was abandoned at the gates.

She gave birth two days later. Sadly, one kitten died, but Alfie and his four all-male littermates thrived. They're all now in loving homes, as is their doting mum.

Alfie's new owner Susan says: "He is doing so well. Our cats Storm and Charlie, who are older than him, have taken him under their paws – we call them the 'three mouseketeers'. He has bonded so well with us. He brings so much happiness to our lives."

LOVE HEALS BROKEN HEART

A sweet staffie's smile is back following the double heartbreak of losing her sister and her beloved owner within weeks.

Milly arrived at Blue Cross Bromsgrove last year after her sister died and their owner never returned from hospital.

Thankfully, the 10-year-old girl had been enrolled in our Pet Peace of Mind scheme, ensuring she would be cared for should she outlive her family.

Caroline Oram, Adoptions Coordinator, says: "Poor Milly was feeling lost and bewildered. Her whole world had collapsed."

To keep her spirits up, the team kept her company in the offices during the day, and after returning from holiday and seeing that Milly was still in our care, Caroline took her in to foster.

Milly soon found love with a staffie-loving couple who had also suffered heartbreak after losing their previous dog.





Photo credit: Zara Davis Photography

Something borrowed, **SOMETHING BLUE**

Poor Pumpkin must have felt she was always the bridesmaid and never the bride after over 500 days in Blue Cross care, watching other horses get adopted while she waited patiently for someone to fall in love with her.

Then Natalie King from Gloucestershire contacted Blue Cross Burford. Her 29-year-old cob Domino had just lost his best friend and was struggling on his own.

“Domino was absolutely miserable – he needed a friend and fast,” Natalie says.

She was matched with Pumpkin, who was looking for a home as a non-ridden companion.

“When the Blue Cross team told me how long she’d been in their care, my heart went out to her,” she continues.

Pumpkin, a 17-year-old skewbald cob, arrived at our Burford horse rehoming unit in spring 2023 after her owner’s circumstances changed.

Now, she lives with Domino on Natalie’s 11-acre smallholding along with one sheep and two pygmy goats. Domino is back to his normal happy self in her company.

“Pumpkin is perfect – an angel pony. She never puts a hoof wrong,” Natalie says.

“She’s so easygoing and polite. She’s a joy to have around.”

A few months after her arrival,

Pumpkin’s legal ownership paperwork arrived – making her adoption official.

And that wasn’t the only ‘yes’ Natalie was saying. The next day, she married fiancé Ben, with Pumpkin and Domino playing a starring role.

“We had a service in the village church and the reception in a tipi in our fields,” Natalie says.

“The horses were very much part of the day, watching the goings on from the paddock, and Pumpkin becoming officially mine just made it more special.”

Unbeknown to Natalie, her bridesmaid used some of her spare dress fabric to make a matching bow for Pumpkin. “It was such a lovely gesture and Pumpkin looked gorgeous,” Natalie adds.

For richer for poorer; in sickness and in health – that’s Natalie’s vow to Pumpkin as well as Ben.



WIN! A dog-friendly hotel stay

Our friends at Sloane Square Hotel, a charming boutique hotel in London, are offering a dog-friendly hotel stay* to one of our readers. Enjoy a relaxing one-night escape for two in a stylish club room, complete with plush robes, soft slippers, a Dyson hairdryer, luxurious Elemis toiletries and your own Nespresso coffee machine. Bring your furry friend – who must weigh 10kg or less – along for the adventure and treat them to full VIP (very important pet) treatment, including a cosy bed, tasty treats, a dog toy and food and water bowls. You'll also get a helpful local guide highlighting the best dog-friendly restaurants, boutique shops, and green spaces around Sloane Square, making it easier to explore the area together. An unforgettable prize for dog lovers everywhere.

Find out more at
sloanesquarehotel.co.uk

Congratulations Debbie Drummer, winner of the dog-friendly holiday from Le Boat in the last issue

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning, answer the question below:

On pages eight to 11, we brought you the story of dog Jeremy. Who is his new canine best friend?

- Barry
- Beverley
- Bluey

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

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Or enter online at
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Closing date Friday, 29 May 2026
 Strictly one entry per household

*Voucher valid for six months from date of issue. Advance booking required and subject to availability. Voucher must be mentioned when booking and presented at check-in. Blackout dates, including public holidays and peak seasons, may apply. Cancellation or rescheduling must follow the hotel's standard cancellation policy. Late cancellations or no-shows may result in the voucher being forfeited. The hotel reserves the right to refuse accommodation to guests or dogs that pose a safety or disturbance risk. Refer to the pet pawlicy QR code above. Use of the voucher constitutes acceptance of these terms and conditions. **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 see more about how we will use your information visit bluecross.org.uk/privacy. Contact our Supporter Care Team on 0300 790 9903 or email info@bluecross.org.uk to change your preferences.

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- 3 Merton
- 4 Victoria

Our rehoming units and centres

- 5 Bromsgrove
- 6 Burford
- 7 Devon
- 8 Hertfordshire (Kimpton)
- 9 Manchester
- 10 Newport
- 11 Rolleston
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- 13 Southampton
- 14 Suffolk (Ipswich)
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For the full map of all Blue Cross locations visit bluecross.org.uk/findus



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We change theirs



Leave a gift in your Will and you could change pets' lives long into the future.



Pets change lives
We change theirs

Please send me a Gifts in Wills information pack

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First name:

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Address:

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I've already included a gift to Blue Cross in my Will

*Please tick if you are happy for us to send future communications to you by: Telephone Email

If you DO NOT wish to hear from us by post please tick this box:



By leaving a gift in your Will, you can ensure your love for pets lives on.

Long after you're gone, you can still be there. There for a sick pet in the operating theatre. There when a homeless pet finds a loving family. Including Blue Cross in your Will is a powerful way to protect sick, injured and homeless pets for years to come.

A gift of any size will have a huge impact for the dogs, cats, small pets and horses that need us, and it will be so gratefully received.

Request our free Gifts in Wills information pack today for guidance on making or amending your Will and leaving a gift to Blue Cross.

Making a Will needn't feel daunting, thanks to our trusted partners MyIntent and the National Free Wills Network, who can help you write one for free. You can find out more in the pack.

To receive your Gifts in Wills information pack, visit bluecross.org.uk/gifts-in-wills or complete the coupon and return to freepost: **Blue Cross For Pets**.

*From time to time we may wish to communicate with you 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 opposite.

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