



SCOTTISH GREYHOUND SANCTUARY

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

2019/2020

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Jodie

1. REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

The Charity's name - **Scottish Greyhound Sanctuary**

Registered Charity number – SC039701

Principal Address

Scottish Greyhound Sanctuary
24 Abbotshall Road
Cults
Aberdeen
AB15 9JX

Names of the Charity Trustees and date of approval
(All appointed at the AGM on 26th May 2019)

Ms Suzanne Simpson - Chairperson
Ms Emma McLeod - Vice Chairperson
Ms Jacqueline Brown - Secretary
Ms Lorraine Baker - Treasurer

There were no changes to trustee positions during this period

2. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document - Charity Constitution

Trustee Recruitment and Appointment

1. An executive committee of four trustees shall be elected at the annual general meeting of the organisation and shall consist of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary.
2. The Trustees must be fully paid up members of the organisation.
3. Individuals will be given a Trustee position only after receiving nominations, for a specific Trustee position, from two other fully paid up members of the organisation. In the event of multiple individuals being nominated for the same Trustee position, the position will be filled by a private ballot of those present at the annual general meeting at which time a majority vote must be gained by one individual.
4. The election of a Trustee will be for one year. All Trustees shall retire annually and shall be eligible for re-election.



3. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

1. Provision of a sanctuary to Greyhounds and Lurchers in danger.
2. Provide veterinary care where needed and to ensure the wellbeing of Greyhounds and Lurchers.
3. Promote responsible Greyhound and Lurcher ownership and in particular encourage the neutering of dogs as a means of reducing stray, abandoned and unwanted Greyhounds and Lurchers.
4. Forge links with other Greyhound and Lurcher organisations in furtherance of the organisations objectives.
5. Provide support and aftercare through the rehoming of Greyhounds and Lurchers.
6. Co-ordination of fundraising through events and raising awareness of the Greyhound and Lurcher breed.
7. Provision of home checks on all potential foster/adoption carers to ascertain individual and home suitability.
8. To always provide and meet the needs of any Greyhound and Lurcher placed in rescue.
9. Promote and implement an equal opportunities policy for all. The organisation will not discriminate on grounds of gender, marital status, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, disability, race and religion, or other grounds of discrimination not prohibited by legislation such as sexual orientation, age etc. when considering potential adopters of Greyhounds placed in their care.
10. Monitor rehoming to ensure compliance with adoption agreement and where this is breached take action to terminate adoption.



Homeless hounds at the SGS kennels

4. MAIN ACTIVITIES IN PURSUANCE OF THESE OBJECTIVES

1. There were a few changes to the SGS Team in 2019/2020. Mary and Bruce left the team while Kirsteen and Gill joined.
2. Following the Dog Lover Show in September 2019 we gave feedback to the organisers regarding the high cost for charities and the lack of awareness raising. We're pleased to say they took this onboard and changed their plans for the 2020 show to include more rescues. The show has been postponed until 2021 due to coronavirus.
3. Sadly, the number of dogs returning to SGS care remained high, with some dogs 'bouncing' more than once. The team invested a great deal of time and effort to try and find out why this was the case. Since then we have updated our policies and procedures, particularly in relation to our Follow Up Service.
4. All adopters now receive an adoption certificate with a full history of their new dog, as far as we know it and the contact details for their allocated follow up coordinators. Adopters new to rescuing dogs also receive a copy of the 56 page book "Adopting a Rescue Dog"
5. All of SGS's dogs are neutered/spayed, vaccinated and chipped (if required) prior to rehoming. Very occasionally we may rehome a dog that hasn't yet been neutered/spayed for health reasons.
6. We have had to recognise that the majority of SGS supporters use Facebook more regularly than the SGS forum. The team has therefore kept active across different social media platforms and a group just for fosterers was started on Facebook. This has given fosterers a supportive place to share photos, stories and advice with each other.
7. Throughout 2019/2020 we have continued to work closely with and foster links with other charities. At times we have approached other charities for help in placing a dog, and vice versa.
8. Fundraising activities were carried out prior to coronavirus hitting our shores, with the usual shows and can collections. Unfortunately some had to be cancelled and this is an issue we will be facing for some time.
9. Meeting the needs of dogs in our care has been successfully maintained, whilst making judgements about need and cost implications to ensure that the charity's money is spent wisely on behalf of all its members.
10. We have continued to rescue as many dogs in need as possible and having great kennels helps with this. We know the kennel dogs are safe and well looked after (pampered!) and this allows us flexibility to respond to emergencies as they arise.



5. ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

It has been another busy year at SGS. As usual our team of volunteers worked tirelessly to rescue and rehome as many hounds as possible. But there is always more going on behind the scenes. Here's some of what we have been getting up to.

ADOPTION SURVEY - FEEDBACK

The number of dogs returning to SGS care after rehoming remained high in 2019/2020. In order to understand this concerning trend we carried out a survey with previous adopters. We wanted as many responses as possible so as well as bulk emails we advertised the survey on various social media platforms. The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive!

OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE ADOPTING FROM SGS?



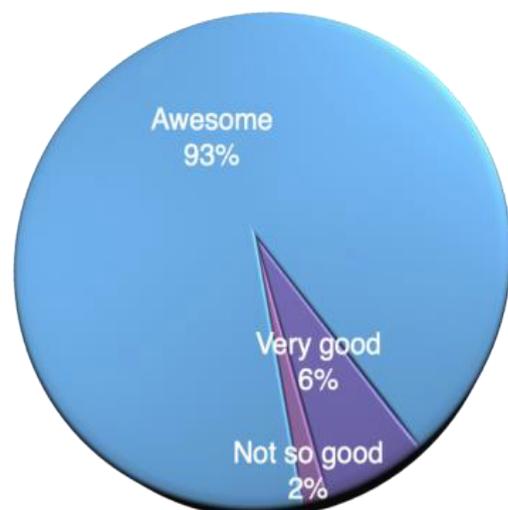
HOW EASY DID YOU FIND THE APPLICATION PROCESS?



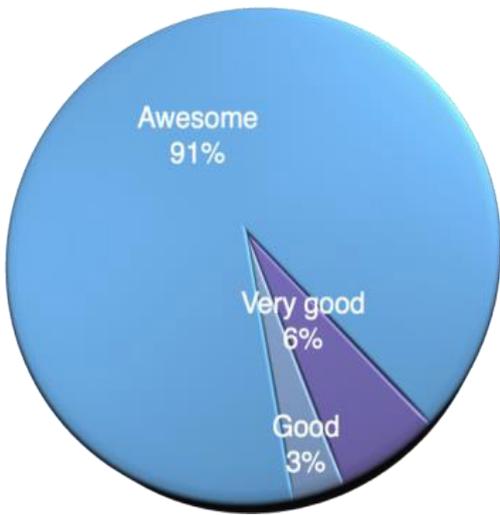
HOW WELL DID SGS COMMUNICATE WITH YOU?



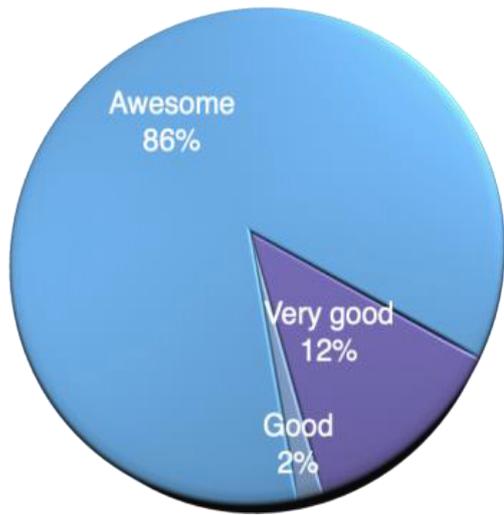
DO YOU FEEL YOU WERE SUPPORTED BY THE SGS TEAM?



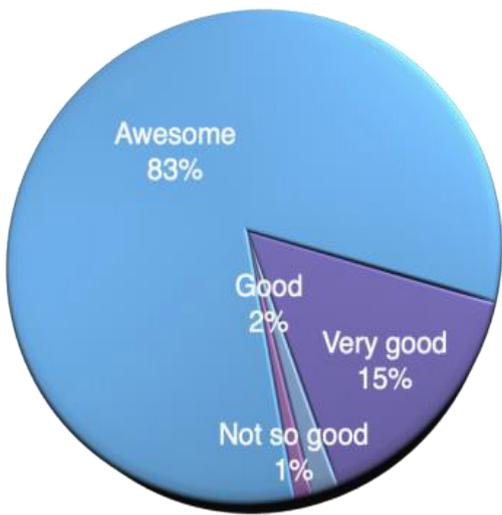
HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR HOME CHECK?



WERE YOU GIVEN ENOUGH INFORMATION ABOUT ADOPTING THROUGH SGS?



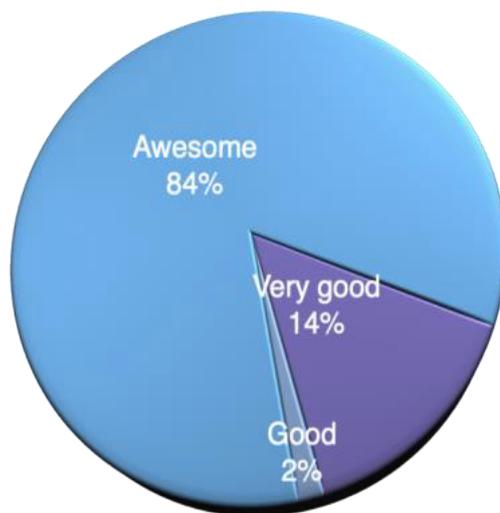
DID YOU FEEL SGS PREPARED YOU WELL ENOUGH FOR ADOPTION?



WHAT DID YOU THINK OF OUR FOLLOW UP PROCESS?



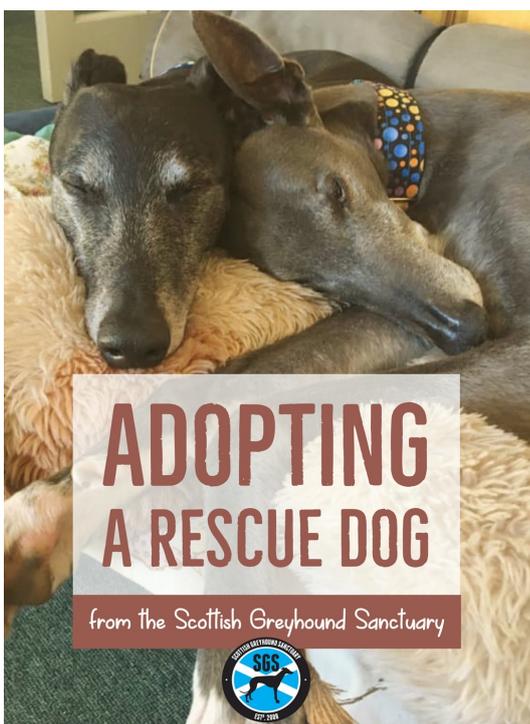
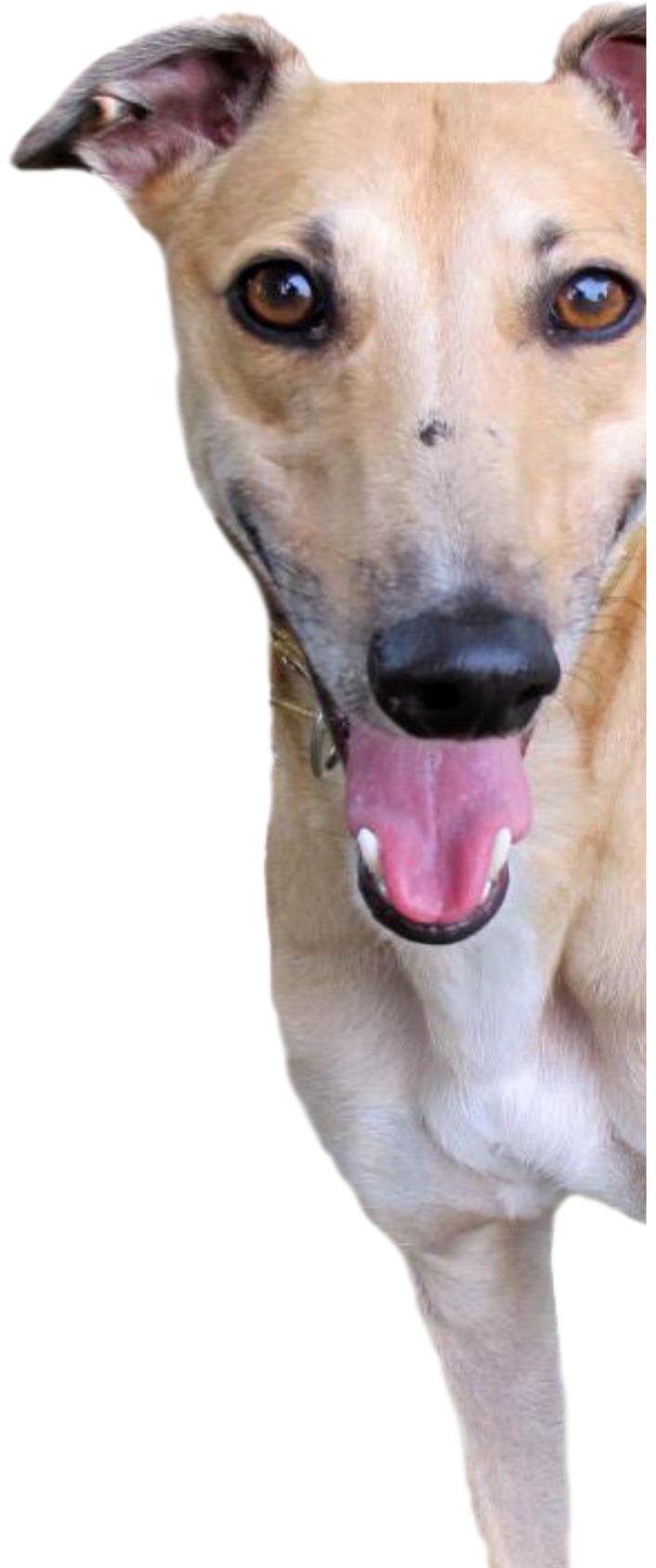
FINALLY, DID YOU FEEL YOU WERE TREATED WITH COURTESY AND RESPECT DURING THE ADOPTION PROCESS?



WHAT WE LEARNED

We learned that our follow up process needed to be improved. And that some people would have liked more information about adoption. Others felt we could have prepared them better. There were a few other helpful suggestions which we have taken onboard.

- We now allocate two team members to every homing and follow up. That way there's always a familiar voice at the end of the phone.
- We have improved our rehoming process so now every adopter gets a written history of their new dog included with their adoption certificate. Everything we know about a homeless dog we will pass on to the new owner.
- Every new adopter will now received a 56 page book 'Adopting a Rescue Dog from the Scottish Greyhound Sanctuary.' The original text was written by ISCP founder Lisa Tenzin-Dolma and with her permission was adapted by the SGS Team. This practical guide covers everything from the first night with your new dog to the most common problems and how to address them.



CHRISTMAS ROSE

In November 2019 SGS was asked to take in an 8 month old greyhound who had a serious heart problem. Without surgery she was unlikely to live more than a few weeks. One of our most experienced fosterers offered to take her in and we began fundraising towards the cost of vet treatment.

Rose had the heart surgery she needed, but unfortunately this only gave her 6 more months. Her fosterers made sure it was the best 6 months ever. Rose passed peacefully after a rapid deterioration. She enjoyed her first birthday walk with lots of friends just days before she passed. We believe every dog deserves a chance, but without the generosity of the SGS supporters little Rose would not have experienced love and happiness.



HOW TO SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE BRIANNA



In February 2020 Brianna (formerly Patience) was returned to our care after developing aggressive behaviour. We had nowhere for her to go. All our experienced foster homes were full and going back to the kennels wasn't an option. The situation was dire. We needed somewhere she would be safe so we could assess her properly and begin to work with her.

One of the SGS team knew of a woman who worked with 'difficult' dogs. We approached her with hope.

Kellyann Stevenson, founder of Canine Campus Pet Rescue, rehabilitates dogs with behavioural issues. When she heard Brianna's story she reassured us the behaviour could be worked with and agreed to take her in as soon as there was a space.

Brianna spent about 4 months at Canine Campus Pet Rescue and she is now in an SGS foster home. She is doing great and there has been no further aggression. She's a sensitive girl and will need a very special forever home, but we're certain she'll find just what she needs!

BIG BOUNCING BOYS

Some dogs seem to have bad luck when it comes to finding their forever homes. For a whole variety of reasons they just keep bouncing back. Two of our long termers are now getting on in years and we'd love to see them settled soon.



LUATH

Luath first came into the care of SGS in 2017, aged 16 months. Since that time he has been in numerous homes, but he still hasn't quite found his place.

He's a sensitive lad who pushes the boundaries for quite a while before settling down. But he's also a big guy and when he's not happy he lets you know.

And this has made it quite difficult to rehome Luath. He's fantastic in so many respects, he loves having his chin tickled, his ears scratched gently and his butt rubbed - but only when he asks for it. He has bitten when he has been stressed and unhappy, so he needs a very special home with experienced owners.

SIMBA

Simba first came to SGS in December 2013 aged 18 months, since then he's had quite a journey. Like Luath, Simba is a sensitive boy and moving from home to home took its toll. He's been in his current foster home for a long time but unfortunately they are unable to keep him permanently.

Each new home Simba goes to throws up different issues so it's very difficult to match him with a forever family. For that reason we are looking for a long term foster space, where Simba can live the rest of his life without the worry of where he's going next.

As with all long term fosters, SGS will pay for any vet treatment required and can help with food bills. We just want this lovely boy to be settled and not have to move again.



The coronavirus pandemic has had a major impact on every aspects of our lives and for SGS it meant we had to halt rehoming. We were unable to transport dogs; from kennels to foster home, foster home to forever home... We were confident all the dogs in our care were safe, but we also knew there was an ever increasing waiting list of dogs needing a space.

But we were also unable to carry out home checks for new applicants. And we will not put a dog in any home until this has been done.

In the lead up to the country going into lockdown the SGS team began putting together policies and practices that would allow us to continue operating to some level. At the very least we needed to be able to rescue dogs in immediate danger. Following consultation with the appropriate agencies we devised policies that allowed SGS to continue operating, albeit to a limited degree. All volunteers were issued with guidance specifying thorough hygiene protocols, the use of PPE and contactless handovers. Travel authorisation letters were also provided to the volunteers transporting dogs.



Then a strange thing happened. Record numbers of applications to adopt started coming in. All we could do was put the applicants on a waiting list. It was frustrating having so many dogs and homes but not being able to put the two together. And of course the dogs waiting in the wings were always on our minds.

Once we had our policy for Rehoming during COVID-19 Outbreak, we began carrying out virtual home checks. We restricted these to applicants with experience and initially only the team carried them out. But as the process became more familiar some SGS volunteers began helping out.

It has certainly been a challenging period. We are pleased we were able to rescue some hounds, and some even found their forever homes.





Most of us need a hand now and again, whether it's a shoulder to cry on or something more practical like a lift to the vet. We recognised this a couple of years ago and since then have been trying to help keep dogs in homes when they otherwise would have bounced, through no fault of their own.

SGS is not a big charity. We don't have corporate sponsorship or associated businesses. 100% of our income comes from fundraising and donations. But we try to do our best with the resources we have. If a home situation breaks down completely and a dog has to come back to our care it is distressing for everyone involved, most importantly the dog.

In 2019/2020 we helped hounds stay in their forever homes by offering behavioural support, by donating food and even arranging volunteer dog walkers. We don't advertise this service. But when a dog is adopted from SGS we have a lifelong responsibility to ensure his or her safety and security. And we have the most fantastic members and supporters who are ready to leap into action when we need their help.



6. VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

HUGE THANK YOU to all our amazing volunteers and wonderful supporters!



SGS is blessed with having fantastic supporters, members and volunteers! From home checks to transport, fundraising to fostering, there's always plenty for our volunteers to be doing.

A lot of our volunteers become involved with SGS after adopting a dog. Others aren't in a position to have a hound but like to help out in other ways. Shaking cans, knitting snoods, running an online auction or a stall at a show or event, hosting a walk... there are so many ways to help out.

And of course we have to remember that SGS Team members are all volunteers too!

Massive thanks to Keiran Marshall; Kay Race; Jane Cormack; Daniel Mathews; Maureen Muldoon; Serenity Cafe; Innocent Pet Care Company; Susan Provan; Cosaig Self Catering; Sunnyside Primary School; Lurcher Appreciation Society - for fantastic fundraising! And of course all our kennel sponsors!

IN MEMORIUM

Sadly a number of SGS hounds cross Rainbow Bridge during 2019/2020. Losing a beloved four legged friend is never easy, but we take some comfort in knowing each dog was loved and had a happy home right up to the end.

*Iris, Ivy, Zita, Moss, Leo, Ben, Benji, Jake,
Taz, Marco, Beck, Digger, Rambo, Skye,
Fudge, Nigel, Joe, Ernie, Alfie, Trixie, Gaia,
Rose, Charlie, Ted, Grail, Sunny, Dennis,
Sam, Scout, Lizzie, Gracie, Paco, Rosie
(apologies if we've missed anyone)*

7. FINANCIAL REVIEW

The report covers the period 01.04.19-31.03.20, as in previous years, this is coincidentally also the tax year.

At the beginning of this period the balance available to SGS was £82,839- these accounts were submitted to OSCR (The Scottish Charity Register) in May 2019 and duly signed off.

Income received by SGS over this period was £31,791 primarily from donations and from fund-raising (£25,200).

Expenses paid over this period was £20,555 with the most significant expense being veterinary fees of £15,226.

This left a surplus of £11,236 available to the charity.

Due to previously having received a number of more significant legacy donations. SGS has managed to accumulate a balance including that brought forward from last year of £94,075 at the close of the accounting period. This has provided an essential buffer to ensure SGS can continue rescuing and rehoming hounds in need.

We, as a charity, must submit these accounts along with AGM documentation by 31.12.2020 and intend to do so shortly before the end of September 2020.

Many thanks go to our independent examiner Mr Mills.

Lorraine Baker
Treasurer
Scottish Greyhound Sanctuary



8. FUTURE PLANS

The world is quite an uncertain place just now, we don't know when, if ever, we will get back to how things were. We don't know when (or if) our regular events will be able to recommence. What we do know is that coronavirus has had a significant impact on the greyhound racing industry and as a result there are even more ex racing greyhounds needing rehomed.

Our plans for 2020/2021 include:

1. A new kennel block is being built to replace an older kennel. We make sure our kennel dogs have the best care and with Michelle looking after them we have no doubts they get that and more. (The new kennel was completed in August 2020)
2. Fundraising activities such as can collections may be restricted for a long time, so the team will continue to explore online/virtual fundraising opportunities.
3. SGS previously offered education and training to volunteers and fosterers. We plan to reintroduce this.
4. We will continue to adjust to the "new normal", ensuring our practice and policies are updated as required.
5. At present most of the ex racing greyhounds we rehome come from England and Ireland. We want to reach out to Scottish trainers to encourage them to rehome through SGS or other independent rescues.
6. We will continue to neuter and vaccinate all our homeless dogs, unless there is a medical reason not to. We will also treat any injuries or illnesses our homeless dogs may have.

9. FINAL WORDS

SGS has grown over the years. We have more homeless dogs than ever, more foster homes, more applications to adopt or foster. Yet we remain a small charity run completely by volunteers.

One of the challenges we face is the extraordinary number of applications to adopt received since lockdown began. We try to be fair with all applicants, however we also need to ensure our dogs are matched with the best possible home. This means applicants with little or no experience of dogs may remain on a waiting list for a while before we can take their application forward.

We appreciate this will be frustrating for some. With so many people working from home at the moment it seems a good time to bring a hound into the home. But one day the world might settle back to how we previously knew it, and we need to ensure the hounds we have rehomed cope with such a change without bouncing back.

As ever we are very grateful to all our supporters and volunteers.

Thank you
Suzanne Simpson
Chair

