



Our Special Friends

Helping people and animals help each other

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www.ourspecialfriends.org

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Community Outreach



68 year old socially isolated man, referred by social care. OSF initiated and secured veterinary care for 'Billy', his only friend and lifeline.

The benefits of animal companionship on human wellbeing

have been proved by countless studies and, for many people, their pet is a vital companion, providing friendship, security and continuity, especially at challenging times.

Our Special Friends is a UK based charity supporting vulnerable human-animal relationships offering practical and emotional support using a multi-disciplinary collaborative approach.

The help we offer includes:

- ✦ dog-walking or accompanied walking via our volunteers or others
- ✦ advice and practical support to keep a pet living with its owner
- ✦ regular visits from a volunteer with their own dog (animal-assisted activity)
- ✦ sourcing, introducing and monitoring a new pet
- ✦ supporting and empowering difficult decisions.

Increased awareness and understanding of the benefits of the human-animal bond and the impact of loss and bereavement.

This work includes:

- ✦ providing advice and support pre-, during- and post-bereavement
- ✦ encouraging planning for the care of the animal to give peace of mind.



Conclusion

This approach is a powerful, low cost intervention for accessing and addressing unmet needs in the community; a new multi-faceted jigsaw piece integrating human and animal health and social care.

A typical testimonial from a client...

"I will never be able to thank you enough. You were the lifeguard when I thought I was drowning, and it was so helpful knowing that you understood and cared, thank you."

