

Happy New Year everyone. Hope you have all had a fantastic Christmas and your hound hasn't eaten too many things they shouldn't.

What an end to the year Hector's had. On Christmas Eve just before 10 o'clock at night a puppy of approximately ten months old got hit by a police car on an emergency call out. The puppy had been dumped a day or so previous at Mile End services. The police lady who hit him was distraught and went back to look for him. She found him bleeding near the services but couldn't catch him. The days went on with no sightings even with Hector's team searching around the clock.

Hayley called out a drone specialist to search the area with heat detection cameras and infrared equipment, but with no luck and the weather conditions taking a turn for the worse we had to stop as all as it picked up on was wild life.

With the situation now getting desperate we decided to bring in the search and rescue dogs. They locked on to the scent right away. The tracking dogs are amazing but after half an hour's work their noses start to get blunt and then slow down. Another two days of tracking and Pixie the Newfoundland found a new blood trail where we tracked the lurcher down. With lots of back up from the police and the public Hector's managed to save the male lurcher. Hayley phoned Border Vets and got the out of hours team to meet us right away. The puppy was placed on a drip, wounds cleaned to wait surgical assessment. Given the history of this poor boy's rescue we affectionately decided to call him "Miles".

The treatment that Miles will require is still unclear but likely to be substantial and we are determined to support him all the way and will post regular updates on our Facebook page and website. In the meantime if you would like to make a donation towards his treatment or indeed Hector's Greyhound Rescue in general please visit our donation page via the following link. All donations are gratefully received.

<http://www.ectorsgreyhoundrescue.org/how-you-can-help.html>

HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF HECTOR'S YEAR 2017, WITH JUST A FEW OF THE MANY DOGS HECTOR'S HAS RESCUED AND RE-HOMED.

January saw the last of Angel's ten puppies that were born in October 2016 going to their new homes.

February was alarmingly quiet on the re-homing front and gave us a few anxious moments as we still continued to have a steady stream of dogs needing our help. Also all the dogs seemed to be black, always the most difficult to re-home.

March was when Fred held his St Patrick's Day Fun Dog Walk at Chirk Castle which was enjoyed by everyone. Fred now holds a fun walk every two months. Look out for details of 2018 walks on Hector's Facebook page and website.

April saw a puppy abandoned with a broken leg. Sadly not the last in 2017. Harry, a Saluki puppy underwent extensive surgery to repair a badly broken front leg. Harry went to live with another young lurcher and a young girl who has become his best friend forever.

May brought another neglected dog to Hector's. James a Saluki/Greyhound cross was abandoned in a desperately ill condition with hemorrhagic diarrhoea and mutilated ears. We feared James would not recover, but with time and some TLC he made a complete recovery.

June brought tears and heartbreak to Hector's when Angel, an old lurcher who had been used for breeding, passed away during her neuter. She had an extensive spread of cancer. She was so close to experiencing love and a proper home probably for the first time in her life and it was cruelly snatched away.

We also held Hector's annual garden party on a glorious sunny day raising much needed funds to continue our work.

July was an exciting month. We held our first Fun Dog Day at Acorn Kennels in Whitchurch which was a huge success and will become an annual event.

August hosted our annual dog show which was our biggest yet. It was so lovely to see so many of "Hector's" dogs looking healthy and happy.

September featured another new event for Hector's. We held a dog show in the middle of Oswestry on the market square. This was a really fun event and we have been invited back to host it again in 2018.

Jackie Roberts also undertook a sponsored Bi-Plane Wing Walk for Hector's in September raising an incredible £1,000.

October welcomed Bridget a heavily pregnant little lurcher into the rescue and nearly 12 months to the day since Hector's last pups arrived Bridget gave birth to seven puppies. Sadly one of Bridget's puppies was born very weak and didn't survive, but the remaining six were strong and healthy and have all found fantastic homes.

November and another puppy abandoned with a broken leg found a place of safety with Hector's. Bryn a five month old Whippet cross is doing well following surgery to his front leg.

December saw Hector's turn Acorn Kennels into a Winter Wonderland complete with a Santa's Grotto for dogs. This was another first time event for Hector's which we hope to turn into an annual occasion.

Sadly, Lily also arrived at Hector's, yet another puppy only twelve weeks old abandoned with a broken leg.

In 2017 we sadly lost our supporters Valerie Fowler, Geoffrey Allens, Mo Jones, Denise Broomhead and Olwen Lloyd.

They will be sadly missed.

FUTURE EVENTS AND INFO

Sunday 14th January 2018 - Freddie's Walk, Starting from Jarrett's Barn, Mill Lane, Cuddington, MALPAS, SY14 7BQ

Yes, our first walk of the New Year and an opportunity to show off those Christmas presents and an early chance to shed some of those pounds that appeared over the Christmas period. The walk is being hosted by Helen Connolly and will start from her home in Malpas. The walk is on bridleways and lanes and will take the best part of two hours. Fred will provide some detailed maps which will be available on the day of the walk.

Mobile 07850322380 for use on the day if lost.

DOGS LOOKING FOR A HOME

GEORGE

George is a happy, affectionate and very cheeky boy who loves to play. He is still an excitable and energetic puppy who can get up to mischief when he's bored so he would benefit from having someone around a lot of the time and needs to be homed with another dog for company. He is good with other dogs and is cat safe, having lived with one in his previous home. George picks things up quite quickly and anybody who has the patience to work with him would be richly rewarded.

FERGAL & FINBAR

They arrived in England totally bewildered and frightened, they have been homed in Kennels under Hector's care and have already made huge progress. They are going for walks on the lead and enjoying and trusting human company. These young hounds really deserve to have proper homes of their own and need to be separated so their individual personalities can be allowed to develop. They need to go to

homes with someone who is experienced with sighthounds and will continue the worthwhile, rewarding rehabilitation of these lovely dogs.

To find out more details about dogs looking for a home visit our re-homing page.

<http://www.hectorsgreyhoundrescue.org/greyhounds-for-rehoming.html>

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Hector's Greyhound Rescue will be holding an AGM on Saturday 20th January 2018. This will be your chance to have a say on what happens in the rescue and also find out more about what happens in the background. We would love to see as many of you as possible. The meeting will run from 9.30am till 11.30am followed by a talk on aging greyhounds and arthritis in older dogs. Sandwiches and refreshments will be provided.

The venue is:

The Qube, Oswald Road, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 1RB. The centre is within the town centre and parking is available in many of the off street car parks.

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Qube/@52.859982,-3.053077,15z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x99f517e88d1b78a!8m2!3d52.859982!4d-3.0530772?hl=en-GB>

If you are attending it would be great if you could let us know in advance by emailing:

sharonwithhectors@gmail.com

AS RECOMMENDED BY FREDDIE

The Bailey Head, Near Oswestry Market, SY11 1PZ, Tel, 01691570418

The Bailey Head is a superb dog friendly Free House in the heart of Oswestry. It is run by Grace Goodlad and Duncan Barrowman and is the perfect stop during those shopping trips. Manny, Belle and Jenny recommend the venison casserole.

With effect from the next edition of the News Letter this section will be called "As Recommended by You". Allowing our readers to share with us their ideas for walks, dog friendly pubs/inns/cafes or holiday destinations that you have had positive experiences with whilst out with their pets.

Details can be sent to the Editor via by emailing:

sharonwithhectors@gmail.com

Thank you Freddie for all your hard work and great information that you have shared with us all.

GREYHOUND HEALTH CARE -Treats and Snacking/Weight Gain

Cutting down on treats is actually one of the easier ways to help your pet lose weight. While taste does play a role, the biggest benefit a pet gets from treats is simply the fact that you are giving them attention and the excitement that brings. Most of the time owners don't know how many calories are hiding away even in the tiniest of treats.

OVER TO YOU - A year in the life of a Hector's volunteer as told by Vicky Hinstridge

Just over a year ago Hayley asked if I knew anyone who would be able to help with updating the Hector's website. Being a naive Hector's recruit I said I would have a think, always keen to help the rescue in whatever way I can. What I didn't realise was that this was Hayley saying "Can I help with the website?" No problem - how difficult could it be? So I began a steep learning curve to get my head around the website and regular updates. Well - it's been a whirlwind of a year.

I met with the fabulous bunch of trustees in January to discuss among other things fund raising activities for the rest of the year. You see the calendar posted on the Hector's website and Facebook page, but didn't appreciate the amount of time and effort that goes into organising these events, meetings, conversations, and messages.

Fundraising events in 2017 included: coffee mornings, Fred's regular fun dog walks, street collections, stalls at shows, dog fun day, dog shows and a garden party. Hector's volunteers and their greyhounds never miss an opportunity such as Halloween or Christmas to dress up. You must be prepared to do almost anything including walking the streets of Oswestry in a dog costume with a collection tin. The rescue totally relies on donations and it is these events and opportunities that allow Hector's to keep going and greyhounds to be saved. People are so kind and generous in giving whatever they can to help these beautiful animals.

Meanwhile greyhounds are constantly coming in and out of the rescue, thanks to the volunteers that help with transporting, fostering, trips to vets and home checks. Hector's has a group of fosters who look after the greyhounds in their own homes before they are found their forever homes. This amazing bunch of people provides the greyhounds with a safe environment to learn about life in a home. It always surprises me how quickly the dogs settle down into their new environment. It's like they know they have been given a second chance. It also gives fosters a chance to understand the character of the greyhound, as you will see if you read their stories on the website re-homing page. Who could resist those big sad eyes and the story behind each greyhound? In fact I was starting to think it was yet another "discrete" ploy of Hayley's to expand our greyhound family as new dogs kept coming in. Emails would often be accompanied by a message that this one would fit in perfectly with our existing family.

I also discovered that there are quite a few "failed" fosters with three or more greyhounds. One is never enough, they are addictive. It can be a very slippery slope, but I do hope we can be brave enough to foster in the coming year and give a greyhound a chance to enjoy life again and pass them on to their forever home.

As the year came to a close, Hector's managed to re-home over 100 greyhounds since April 2015. That is 100 lives saved.

You will also have read about the tireless work of volunteers which has resulted in Miles being

rescued after 4 days of searching over Christmas. The volunteers have experienced all sorts of emotions over the year but the one thing that keeps them going is the love of greyhounds.

At the start of the year I would often get overwhelmed with the number of greyhounds that need rehoming but I now understand that if we all do a little bit, collectively we can make a big difference in a greyhound's life.

A STORY OF "HOPE"-As told by Sheila Bridge

Some of you will have an Irish greyhound (both ears tattooed) but have you ever thought about the ordeal they went through to get to the UK?

We recently rescued two dogs from Ireland. Their journey started in Dublin, then the ferry to Fishguard, which took three and a half hours. From there they travelled through South Wales to Kent, then back up the M6 to Cannock, where we picked them up.

This is the tale of one of the dogs, as seen through her eyes.

"I have had a pretty hard life, kept in filthy conditions and used for breeding. I never knew what a comfy bed felt like. We were housed on concrete which was usually wet. I never had enough to eat and was constantly hungry. Then one day I was taken to different kennels where they spayed me and said I would be going to the UK shortly. I didn't know what that meant, but I soon found out.

As soon as my stitches were out I got loaded into a big van. It had sixteen narrow cages made of hard wire, piled two high. I was on a bottom one with someone in the cage above me which was scary. It was cold and very uncomfortable and I had sores on my chest which rubbed against the wire. When we were all caged, they shut the door and this plunged us into darkness. We were terrified. The van started to move and we could hear lots of banging and shouting. The van stopped, but we were still moving, up and down, we could feel vibrations under us. I thought I was going to die, my heart was racing so fast.

After a long time the van started to move again. Some time later we stopped and some dogs got off, this happened a few times, but I was always left behind in the dark. But at long last it was my turn. Two people were there to greet me, but the first thing I needed was a huge wee. They told me I had been cooped up for nearly twenty four hours. These people spoke kindly to me and gave me cuddles, which was something I had rarely experienced, but it felt good.

We got into a car, and a human sat with me, I snuggled up to her. I looked into her eyes and she told me life would be sweet from now on. When we arrived at the kennels, I was examined and they said I was very underweight and extremely dirty and smelly. I didn't care. They gave me a name, Hope, because they hoped I would recover and get stronger.

And that is what I am doing. I was taken to a foster home where there were other dogs to play with and cuddles by the bucket full. My foster's adopted me, this is my home forever and life has never tasted

so "sweet".

SPECIAL THANK YOU

A huge thank you to Kath Metcalfe for not only knitting beautiful snoods for Hector's Merchandise Stalls, but for also knitting more snoods for all our hounds in the Kennels this winter to keep them snug and warm as well as looking very smart.

Thank you again for everything you have done to help through 2017 and for what you will do to help us save even more of these beautiful dogs in 2018.

Wishing you all a very Happy New Year.

Hayley and the team at Hector's Greyhound Rescue