

# PETS mag

the lifestyle magazine for  
pet owners

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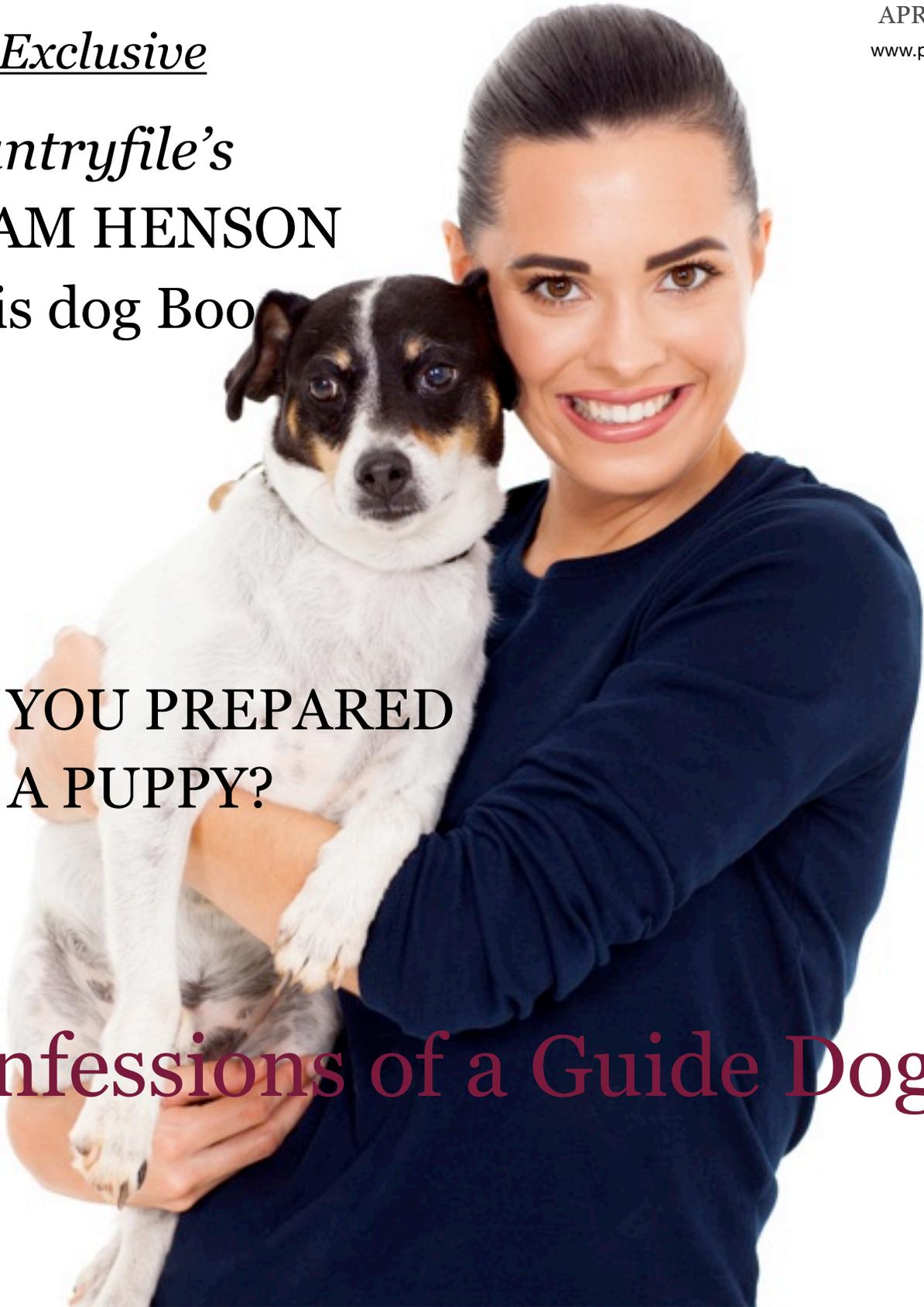
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[www.petsmag.co.uk](http://www.petsmag.co.uk)

*Countryfile's*  
ADAM HENSON  
& his dog Boo

ARE YOU PREPARED  
FOR A PUPPY?

Confessions of a Guide Dog...

WIN A 3D SCULPTURE OF YOUR PET!



# My Pet

ADAM HENSON is a regular presenter on *Countryfile*, co-presented the second series of *Lambing Live* alongside Kate Humble and has also appeared on *Coast*, *Inside Out*, *Top Gear* and *Gardener's World Live* in 2011.

Adam runs the Cotswold Farm Park, which pioneers rare breed conservation and is part of the 650-hectare Benborough Farm. Adam talks to *Pets Magazine* about his beautiful Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla Boo.

**What breed is Boo and why did you choose him/her?**

Boo is a Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla. I chose the Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla as the breed was recommended to him by a friend. He was looking for a dog which was easy to train, good with children and of a standard size.

**How long have you had Boo?**

Strictly speaking Boo belongs to my son, Alfie. Alfie has had her

since she was a puppy and she is now three years old.

**Does Boo come with you to work?**

Boo lives in the house next to the farm office so in effect she is at

**Do you take take doggie-friendly holidays with Boo?**

Boo always comes with us if we hire a holiday cottage in the countryside and when we visit my sister in Northumberland. If we go abroad we have a good friend



Adam with Boo. Photo courtesy of Cheltenham Racecourse

work at home all the time. For work on the farm we have border collies, however Boo will often come along for the run and loves the exercise.

**What difference does Boo make to your life?**

Boo is a much-loved family pet and as well as being great company, she protects the family by barking if someone comes to the door.

who looks after our pets so they are always taken well care of.

**What are the best holidays you've taken with Boo?**

Boo enjoys visiting the coast in Cornwall and loves a run on the beach, although she is a bit rubbish at swimming.

### Do you take Boo with you to restaurants and pubs?

Our dogs are very settled in the house at home and perfectly happy to be left for a few hours if we go out for the evening. However many of the local pubs in the Cotswolds welcome dogs as long as they are well behaved and there are some great walks to be enjoyed from many of the Cotswold villages.

### What are Boo's favourite things in the world?

Boo loves anything she can carry around in her mouth, from a tennis ball to a shoe.... we're always trying to find odd shoes which have been mysteriously moved around the house.

### Does Boo have any tricks or special character traits?

Boo loves being in front of the camera and likes having her photograph taken. She has recently featured in photo shoots for Joules Clothing and Cheltenham Racecourse. Boo loves attention and will always greet members of the family when they come downstairs in the morning, or return to the house, with a gift in her mouth and by "talking" to them. She chatters away quite loudly, we just wish we knew what she was saying.

### Is there anything you feel strongly about regarding pet welfare?

I do believe a healthy balanced diet is key for all pets, combined with plenty of exercise. This is why I was pleased to team up with Devon based natural pet food



Boo. Photo courtesy of Jules Clothing.

company Forthglade, to promote better healthcare for dogs. I like dogs that are well behaved and the owners have control over them. I ensure that my dogs have their own space to sleep and rest and always discourage them from begging at the table when the family are eating, which is something I feel quite strongly about. Human food is really not suitable for dogs. To ensure their

continued health I also take them regularly to the local vets for a check-up. ■



# Confessions of a Guide Dog...

*Off duty: Uska the guide dog*

“...such a change for Uska, spilling the beans, instead of trying to eat them,” jokes his 'mum' Joanne Roberts while Uska, the guide dog, licks her face.

*Confessions of a Guide Dog* has been written by the guide dog's owner, sharing how she still loves life, living it blind, with an animal that changed everything. Here, we serialise the first of two parts of a chapter from *Confessions of a Guide Dog* - more to come in the May edition of *Pets Magazine*.

## ‘Me and My Mam’

“ I was a year old when I left Auntie Val and Uncle Charlie. Yes, it was a wrench, but we all knew I had a destiny to fulfil, little me. Next, I was taken on by the G Team, as Mam calls them, a team of dog savvy professionals who train us to be the best guide dogs we can be. Mr Nick was my G Teacher, and did he know how us dogs tick!

What training happens with the G Team, stays with the G Team, and I guess it's up to GDUK to let on. Whatever they do, my Mr Nick was very good at it. He was so good, I made it to harness stage, believe it or not, early! As a shiny new guide dog I qualified, got the

harness and medal to prove it, AND my Mam, when I was 18 months old.

The moment mam and me first met I could tell she was funny, funny in a roll on my back, legs in the air, belly tickling kind of way. Us dogs, we can sense these things by reading body language as clearly as you might read a road sign. So, yes, I summed up my mam as soon as I smelt her, marmite and all. I wouldn't have called her a pushover, but, the signs were there.

It was a summer morning when Mr Nick walked me up the drive of my new home. I don't mind telling you, I was a little daunted. As Mr Nick wasn't I didn't let it worry me too much. I padded alongside him, very smart and proud of my new harness. Negotiating my way across the large gravel stones, leading up to a strange front door, I was ready for anything as he



Joanne & Uska

reached for the bell. Before his finger touched the button, the door flung open. And there she stood, my Mam, a vision in odd socks.

She looked like fun, but the silly moo burst into tears as she knelt down to put her arms around my neck and hug me like I'd never been hugged before. What more could a young handsome lab do but lick her face. I never have forgotten the taste of those tears.

Mam had never had a dog like me before. So, the day after this first introduction we had to go away, for a few days, to a guide dog friendly hotel. This gave us time to get to know each other while Mr Nick started training us together. The main thing was how to take care of me. It's pretty basic stuff all dog owners do. You know, feeding, grooming and poop scooping. But remember, Mam can't see. Dad explains it better.

I've lost count of the times I've heard him say, "You try picking up his curly whips with closed eyes, specially the steamers." crude, but he has a point. Mind you, Dad's now Head of Poop Scooping. Mam makes him do it, whispering in my ear, "Why have a husband and shovel shi..." alright that's enough, but you get my drift?

Then there was the grooming, Mam had to learn that to make sure people still thought me gorgeous. A passing lady once said I'd have made a fortune in advertising, and she worked at some kind of agency place called, 'Paws for Thought'. Mam also learnt the "Wait, wait... WAIT!" routine with my food. Remember, the one Auntie Val taught me.

In our room, on a night time, we started to get to know each other as she talked to me and I just listened. I was quite happy to sit there nuzzling into her, getting that spot behind by ear rubbed exactly how I liked it. That's when I saw, close up, why she needed me. You should've seen her legs, covered in scrapes and bruises as black as my fur.

Up until then, she had tried going out on her own, always with disastrous results, like falling over bollards, down stairs and onto small children. When I licked her knees, she got down on the floor next to me so I could put my head on her lap. She stayed like that

half the night, getting used to the idea she'd never walk alone again. By the morning, I nearly burst my 'hi- viz' straps with pride, going along for breakfast with my new mam. Mr Nick felt something similar as he got down to business, showing her what I was capable of. We practised and practised with my harness, in the streets and parks around the hotel, until it was time to go home.

I was full of my own brilliance as I curled under the table while they ate lunch. Now then, perhaps, this is the moment I should introduce you to my own little demon, a greedy pup that sits on my shoulders whispering wicked, wicked thoughts. There under the table, was the first time I heard him. He suggested I might like to do something, if I was so, terribly bored. He kept egging me on, "Why not?" he yapped, "You've got to do something. Go o-o-on."

So, I ate my lead. Nearly all of it as well. Then, seeing as I was free, I trotted happily back to our room. Mam found me outside the door, snoring my ears off. That's how I came to hear another first, a certain note in Mam's voice. The way she said, "USKA!" would have

”  
made a Rottweiler squirm. ■

**Confessions of a Guide Dog is available to download from Amazon and iTunes, for around £3.99. 25% of royalties will go towards Uska's bid to raise the fee to sponsor another guide dog like him. Search for the book by title when you visit Amazon or Apple Books online, or follow one of the following links:**

**Amazon UK: [Link to book.](#)**

**Apple UK: [Link to book.](#)**



# ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A PUPPY?

By ADEM FEHMI, a leading canine behaviourist

Bringing a puppy into your family home can be very exciting and rewarding. It can also be very stressful. It is crucial to remember that a puppy will remain a puppy for only a tiny part of its life; it will very soon grow and develop into an adult dog.

Not everyone thinks about this when they buy a puppy. I am very lucky to work with a local rescue centre so these days it no longer surprises me to see yet another young dog being given up on, even though 18 months ago they were their owner's pride and joy, worth every penny of the 1200 quid spent on them and the subject of a daily Facebook post. Now they are a pain in the backside, worthless and on a rescue centre's website.

It's sad but true: the unrealistic or naive would-be dog owner is very common in the UK. This is clear not just from the number of unwanted dogs found in rescue shelters up and down the country, but from the behavioural issues shown by dogs and the amount of dog attacks reported.

It is therefore vital that you as a new owner are prepared for your puppy's arrival and keen to understand its needs, as well (of course) as to love it. So where should a responsible, realistic approach to puppy purchase start? Firstly let's look at breeders. Bear in mind that good breeders (which includes those who breed cross breeds) will advertise on the Internet very carefully — if at all. They will not sell puppies without a

contract and, in most cases, will make it hard for you to get hold of their puppies. They know (as owners should) that dogs are

complex creatures and should not be bought for children as presents, or simply because a couple have a new home. If your dog is to be a happy, healthy and well-behaved dog it will — in fact must — become part of your life, your team and your day — every day!

Your dog is also part of a long-established practice. The domestication of dogs is no coincidence. Much of what we humans have selected them for involves making the most of some of the qualities they possess that have, in turn, helped us as a species to evolve, survive or simply be more content than we might otherwise be. Thus we have kept and bred dogs to help us hunt for food, to guard our territory, for our own

entertainment, for play and for the affection and devotion they can offer. It's no wonder that they have been a popular pet, not just for centuries but for millennia.

That said, not all dogs are the same. You should therefore think very carefully about the type of dog you pick: don't base your decision solely on its looks. Not many dogs are bred for their qualities as pets alone; often dogs are bred for certain working traits, for beauty or even just by accident.

Keep this in mind — but also consider your own traits. Think about your lifestyle, the kind of person you are and may need to be. Are you patient, energetic, affectionate? There are also the practical considerations to think about: the extra costs involved and the time needed to guide your puppy towards a successful and happy life.

Once you have chosen your puppy, it needs to get to know you. Most owners collect their puppy at eight weeks, although I like to leave mine with the litter and mother for an extra week or two if possible. I always visit during this period and take the puppy for short exploratory sessions away from the bitch and the litter. We might, for example, gently and in a controlled manner, meet new dogs and children, not to mention the vehicle in which the pup will soon travel to its new home.

A good breeder will have often handled the puppies each day during what we call the transitional period (two to three

weeks). This is crucial. He or she should not mind you visiting the litter for controlled meets with your new puppy.

Similarly good breeders will ensure that the puppy is offered

Adem and puppy



various modest environmental challenges to deal with: sounds, objects, unfamiliar surfaces for example. They will also help the puppies with toilet training by having a clear sleep and play area. I always ask to see if the breeder can pop my puppy in a small crate, which I provide for short periods of time each day after strenuous exercise (playing with litter mates for example). This will help my puppy to cope better once I get it home and will have it prepared for

the situations it will have to experience there.

Even when it is home and part of your family, there will still be some acclimatisation involved. A good approach is to expose your

puppy carefully to other dogs (ensuring, however, that they have no emotional tie to your pup). In addition, if you have children or guests who may be very excited, you must diffuse this excitement and keep things calm.

The puppy needs to be helped to learn, in the most beneficial way, about its environment, about its fellow animals and, of course, about us — the species it is now living with. ■

**Working across London and the South East, canine**

**behaviour specialist Adem Fehmi BSc (Hons)FMCFBFA/FMGODT from Dog-Ease (www.dog-ease.co.uk) also runs classes in obedience and agility as well as working with gun dogs from his Hertfordshire base. Describing his training methods as practical, plausible and positive, Adem gives over much of his free time to working with rescue dogs as well as visiting hospitals with his own black Labrador Yogi.**

# A Clean Bill of Health



MALCOM D WELSHMAN B.V.Sc shares with *Pets Magazine* readers another of his short stories based on his many years as a vet. *A Clean Bill of Health* tells of the trials and tribulations of treating a pet parrot.



Mrs Tidy swung the parrot cage containing the cockatiel onto the table. Bill's cage was spotless. Its metal bars gleamed. Its mirrors shone. Both feed and water pots brilliant in their whiteness. The floor too was spotless. Not a mark on the overlying sand sheet. It was a wonder Bill ever dared to relieve

himself.

Even Bill managed to reflect this immaculate clean image. He was a Lutino. No dusty grey feathering for him. But a pristine, pure white plumage.

Unmarked save for the yellow head and crest and the characteristic orange cheek feathers. Just at that moment Bill wagged his tail and relieved himself.

'Sorry about that,' murmured Mrs Tidy.

'Perfectly natural,' I replied with a shrug. 'It's the Call of Nature.'

'It's all the germs I worry about,' said Mrs Tidy with a switch of her broad builder's shoulders.

'Germs?'

'You're a vet. You should know what I mean.' Mrs Tidy looked round as if in fear of being overheard.

'Salmonella, E. coli. Chlamydia,' she hissed. 'Even ...' She paused and leaned forward. 'Even MRSA.'

She straightened up to her full height and gazed down at me. 'So I want you to give Bill the works.'

Mrs Tidy went on to explain. A complete blood count, Chlamydia screen, and a culture of the throat and vent were required.

I gulped. Bill scuttled to the other end of his perch and raised his crest in alarm. The suggestion of a swab up his cloaca was clearly not to his liking.

But Mrs Tidy was adamant. 'Bugs,' she boomed her steel grey eyebrows rising like Tower Bridge. No way could she be crossed.

So I acquiesced. Bill was booked in for his overhaul the following day. And once the tests had been carried out he was returned to Mrs Tidy with instructions to come back in a week's time to discuss the results.

A week to the day, I was subjected to another blast from Mrs Tidy's spray gun before Bill's cage was hoisted onto the table.

'All clear,' I was able to pronounce. 'Bill's got a clean bill of health.'

'Well you've missed something then,' said Mrs Tidy. 'He's got the squits. 'Probably picked it up when he was here last week.' Mrs Tidy shuddered. The word 'Germs' floated unsaid in the air between us.

I peered in at Bill's sand-sheet. Pristine. Unsoiled. Spotless. 'Just changed it,' said Mrs Tidy. 'But he has been loose these last three days.'

I tried to reassure her that all was well with Bill. 'Still eating is he?' I

### Win 1 of 3 copies of Malcolm's latest book!

For your chance to win one of three copies of Malcolm D Welshman's book *Pets a Plenty*, please answer the following question:

*What is Malcolm's former profession?*

Send your answer including your name and telephone number to [editor@petsmag.co.uk](mailto:editor@petsmag.co.uk).

The judge's decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

Entries restricted to readers resident in the UK.

asked. The scoured empty containers in his cage gave me no indication of his food intake.

'Yes,' replied Mrs Tidy. 'What?'

A long list ensued. Peanuts, thoroughly washed. Sunflower and sesame seeds equally scoured. Sprouts, steamed. Sweet corn, boiled. Apples, stewed'

'Well there's your answer.'

I explained. 'Bill's environment and feeding regime are just too sterile for his own good. He needs a few bugs around to build up some natural immunity.'

The mention of 'bugs' sent a shiver coursing through Mrs Tidy's torso. She visibly flinched. But I persevered. Tried to convince her a more down-to-earth diet would suit Bill better. Eventually she acquiesced and left assuring me she'd take my advice and feed Bill a more natural diet.

A fortnight later, I received a package in the post. It was carefully sealed with a biohazard label plastered across it. Having hacked it open, I was presented with a plastic container labelled 'Bill Tidy' and dated. For a panic-stricken second I thought I was being presented with Bill's body. But no. When I unscrewed the lid, there, on a piece of cut sand-sheet, was a dropping. Green and white. Well formed. A perfect poo.

I was delighted.

Why? Because it meant Mrs Tidy would no longer poo-poo my advice.

**MALCOLM D WELSHMAN**  
**B.V.Sc is a retired vet and author of three pet novels. The first, *Pets in a Pickle*, with a foreword by James Herriot's son, reached number two on Kindle's bestseller list. His latest, *Pets A Plenty* is available from Amazon at [www.tinyurl.com/mxg85wn](http://www.tinyurl.com/mxg85wn) His website is [www.malcolmwelshman.co.uk](http://www.malcolmwelshman.co.uk).**

# Pet Tales book reviews

**C**AT owner David Cliff, MD of *Gedanken*, a company specialising in coaching-based support and personal development, reviews a very practical book that will help cat owners keep their pets in good health.



## A-Z of Cat Health and First Aid

By Andrew Gardiner  
RRP £14.99  
Souvenir Press

I think our pets are a real paradox. They evolved over millions of years, often to withstand the most challenging of conditions a primitive environment could offer. They are tough, robust, agile and adaptive. Paradoxically however, they are prone to sickness, injury and aging. In a primitive world, animals lived and died forming part of the food chain and "survival of the fittest" was the norm. In a developed world, we can extend life and offer many protections wherein this rule no longer applies.

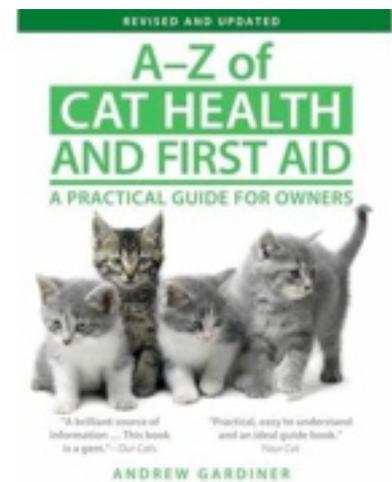
For our pets, in common with us Homo Sapiens, modern technology and biomedicine increases quality of life and life expectancy. However, the modern environment brings a whole range of challenges and dangers. There weren't cars, or toxic substances of the nature that you find in the

ordinary back garden, when our pets initially evolved. Equally, extending our pets lives produces a whole range of challenges, including heart problems, stroke, blood pressure, obesity and myriad other disorders.

Specifically looking at cats - as you know I frequently do. Cats climb trees, can jump five times their height and can withstand falls from amazing heights without apparent injury. This is not always the case and the rough-and-tumble of our feline friends can result in injury and disease. House cats, for example, an increasing phenomena, face the challenge of getting appropriate dietary fibre such as grass into their system to deal with ingested fur. Outdoor cats tend not have that problem so much but equally are prone to greater injury and disease from their prey and other creatures they come into contact with.

Cats are part of the family and just like any family member, we want them to live a long fulfilling happy lives. You may recall my earlier Pets Magazine article some months ago on pet bereavement and its impact upon owners.

This 200+ page book is practical guide to understanding cat health, both in terms of how to maintain it and how to intervene in a crisis. Causation and symptomology of many common cat ailments are described with clarity and ease, along with first-aid interventions and information that allows one to better discriminate the urgency of need in terms of when seek veterinary attention.



There's no doubt about it, complex animal health problems need an animal healthcare professional, but there is so much we can do to inform ourselves to better care for our cats day to day and better intervene when they have mishaps or illnesses.

This book is easy to read and understand, well indexed and is pitched about right for the normal every-day awareness of non-veterinarian carers to be able to make a real difference to our feline friends both in the long term, and at times of emergencies.

Over 200 common illnesses are explained in this highly practical book that is good to browse in general or use as a specific reference work. This book also very sensitively addresses the duty we must all one day perform for our cherished pal and its impact on us and other animal companions. ■

# WIN a 3D Sculpture of your pet!



We've got a fantastic prize up for grabs this month – an extremely life-like 3D sculpture of YOUR pet!

sculpture of their pet. One winner will be notified via email.

Arty Lobster ([www.artyllobster.com](http://www.artyllobster.com)) creates the hi-tech sculptures from around ten pictures of a dog or another pet which the owner uploads to the company's website. The result is a perfect little replica of the pet.

*To Enter the Competition:*

Please go to our competition page at: <http://www.competitionshub.co.uk/competition/win-a-3d-sculpture-of-your-pet-7/>

The lucky winner will be chosen at random to receive a 3D



Please see further Ts&Cs on the competition page (link above.)

The closing date for entries is Monday April 20 at 12 midnight.

To buy a 3D pet sculpture, please visit: <http://www.artyllobster.com/product.html>



# Sophie's Choices

**Top product picks** by our resident reviewer Sophie, the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel.

## Samsung SmartCam

RRP £99.99

Ever had that feeling that someone is watching you?

Here's a great way to keep tabs on your pet pooch or feline with Samsung's innovative, and excellent, SmartCam SNH-1011N IP Camera. The SmartCam allows pet owners to monitor their furry friends while out and about or at work through the SmartCam app, which can even alert owners that pets are feeding, barking or misbehaving. It's a great gadget that's also extremely useful as well. iOS and Android compatible.

Available from [Currys](#).



## FURminator

RRP from £27.50.

The FURminator is a great little tool that really does a fantastic deshedding job, especially good for longer haired breeds like Cavaliers! Regular use of the comb is also said to reduce moulting.

FURminator products are stocked in Pets at Home, Jollyes, CDS – The Range, Pets Corner.



## Bespoke collars, leads & other accessories for your dog

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