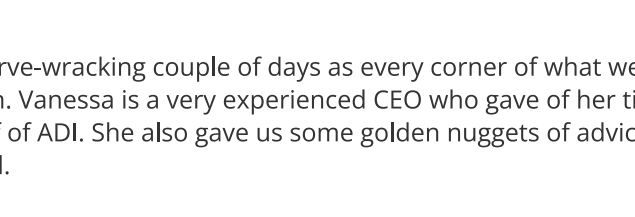


## A word from our CEO



There are certain milestones in any growing organisation that bring the whole team together in a very common purpose and breathe inspiration and renewed vigour into the work we do. In November we were visited by Vanessa Wey, CEO of Osmose Assistance Dogs in Belgium and she undertook our final assessment for full accreditation of Assistance Dogs International (ADI).

It was a rigorous and somewhat nerve-wracking couple of days as every corner of what we do was scrutinised and assessed against the ADI standards in person. Vanessa is a very experienced CEO who gave of her time freely to come to the UK and put us through our paces on behalf of ADI. She also gave us some golden nuggets of advice about how to develop and improve our work as we go forward.

Earlier this month we received the fabulous news that we passed! Dogs for Autism is now a fully accredited member of ADI. This will bring the charity many benefits and will give our assistance dog teams an extra seal of approval in the community both at home and abroad.

We are a collaborative bunch at Dogs for Autism and we are thrilled to be able to further build our relationships with other accredited organisations in the industry. It also allows us to join the UK umbrella body Assistance Dogs UK, a charity which brings all ADI accredited organisations together to collaborate and to further improve our industry at home.

We are deeply grateful to a number of professional friends who have really gone 'above and beyond', giving of their time and expertise to support us thus far and guide us in these early years.

So, at the end of an extraordinary year which has seen us establish ourselves in our new building, embed our new training model, grow our family of wonderful volunteers and welcome a group of fabulous new staff members to the team, the ADI accreditation is the icing on the cake.

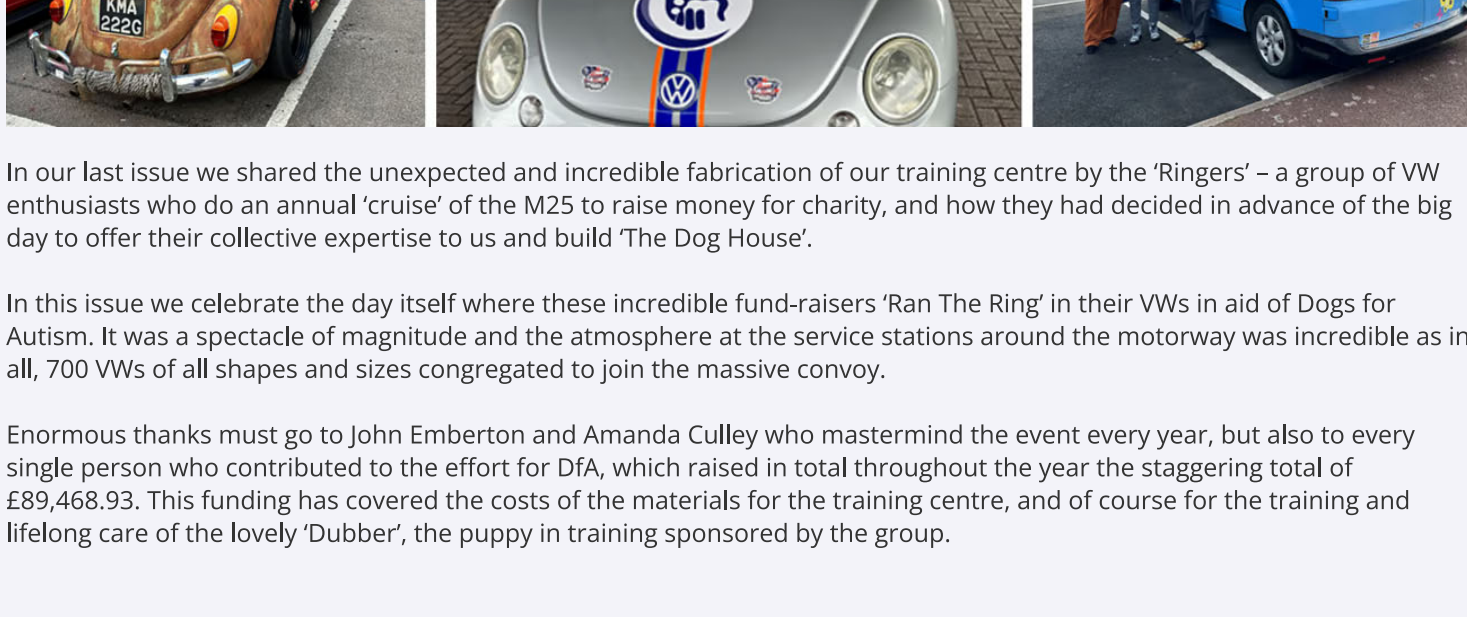
2024 will be a year of consolidating, maturing and improving. Working with our partners and their families to make sure we continue to do what we are here to do, which is to enrich the lives of autistic people and their families by training and providing them with incredible and life changing canine partnerships.

Wishing you all a very peaceful and joyful festive period.

*AA Ma*

## Funding Highlights

### Run the Ring 7 - 'Grand Total'



In our last issue we shared the unexpected and incredible fabrication of our training centre by the 'Ringers' – a group of VW enthusiasts who do an annual 'cruise' of the M25 to raise money for charity, and how they had decided in advance of the big day to offer their collective expertise to us and build 'The Dog House'.

In this issue we celebrate the day itself where these incredible fund-raisers 'Ran The Ring' in their VWs in aid of Dogs for Autism. It was a spectacle of magnitude and the atmosphere at the service stations around the motorway was incredible as in all, 700 VWs of all shapes and sizes congregated to join the massive convoy.

Enormous thanks must go to John Emberton and Amanda Culley who masterminded the event every year, but also to every single person who contributed to the effort for DFA, which raised in total throughout the year the staggering total of £89,468.93. This funding has covered the costs of the materials for the training centre, and of course for the training and lifelong care of the lovely 'Dubber', the puppy in training sponsored by the group.

### BBC Children in Need 2023

We were lucky enough to be included in the BBC Children in Need media coverage again, with two of our partnerships being featured this year.

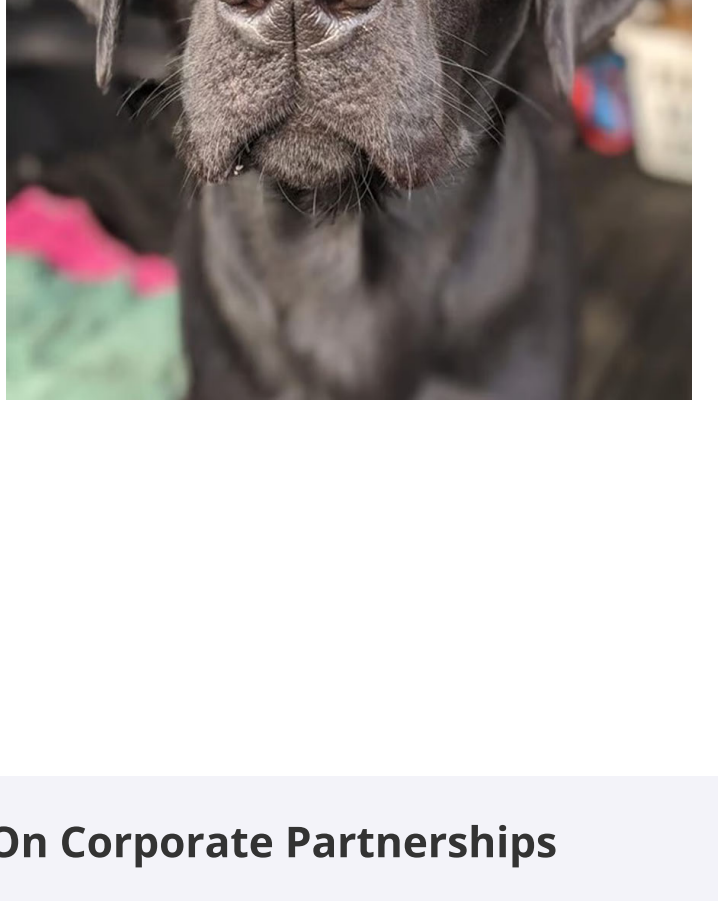
An interview with Rebecca was aired on Radio 2 several times during the Children in Need week, as well as on Radio 1. Rebecca spoke eloquently about how difficult life as an autistic young person can be, and the life-changing support of her assistance dog, Lola.

The Children in Need Bargain Hunt Special showed the story of Zana and her successful partnership with assistance dog, Luna. The family were interviewed by TV celebrity chef, Jean-Christophe Novelli, who as the father of a young autistic boy knows first-hand the challenges that autism can present.

[Click here to read more about it...](#)

## Spotlight...

### A new Ambassador...



#### Jean-Christophe Novelli

After visiting the DFA training centre following the BBC Children in Need filming, Jean-Christophe Novelli was clearly moved by the work of the charity and kindly agreed to become an Ambassador.

Jean-Christophe is well known as an award winning celebrity chef but also enjoys cooking with his children, including his autistic son, Valentino, who loves to sample his Dad's food!

We know that Jean-Christophe will be a great addition to our team of Ambassadors.

### A Partnership...



#### Hugo and Isobel

Hugo is a 4 year old Labrador who lives with his partner, Isobel. This is what Isobel's Mum, Tania, has to say about him:

"Hugo supports Isobel with her emotions brilliantly. He is great at identifying when she is struggling and will nestle into her and distract her.

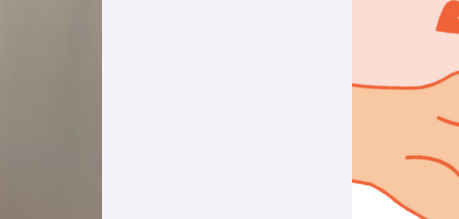
He knows when she just needs a doggy cuddle and will jump up on her bed and snuggle in with her. From very early on, when Isobel was struggling with school work, she would get stressed and he would just put his head on her lap, she would stroke him and instantly calm down.

Hugo can also do a compression cuddle; if Isobel is laying on the floor he will lay across her. He just seems to have this knack of knowing when to do these things without being prompted.

He loves to be loved and gives so much love back to us all."

**Hugo fun facts:**  
**Age:** 4 years 9 months  
**Breed:** Labrador  
**Siblings:** Luna, Ollie, Jerry G and Lily  
**Favourite Food:** Any, he is a Labrador, but all jokes aside he loves cucumber and cheese. 🥒🧀  
**Favourite Activity:** Swimming or finding muddy puddles. He loves water!  
**Latest Achievement:** Graduated! Woohoo! Well done Team Hugo!

## On Corporate Partnerships



In October we launched a new partnership with Canine Life.

Canine Life, part of Canine Life Sciences Group Ltd, are a vitamin and joint supplement company in the UK Pet Food industry.

With a special discount for our supporters, the collaboration will help raise awareness and fundraising for Dogs for Autism. Followers can get a 10% discount on their products when purchased via their shop, with seasonal discounts and special offers to follow as our partnership develops. In addition, Canine Life pledge to donate £1 from the sale of each bottle of their Senior Joint Supplements to Dogs for Autism.

If your dog is in need of some extra joint support, please consider looking at their website and purchasing these supplements which will benefit our charity. <https://caninelife.co.uk>

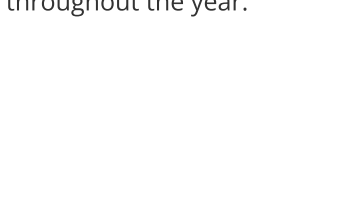


OSCAR and Dogs for Autism have a long partnership which has seen their generous help for our charity continuing throughout 2023.

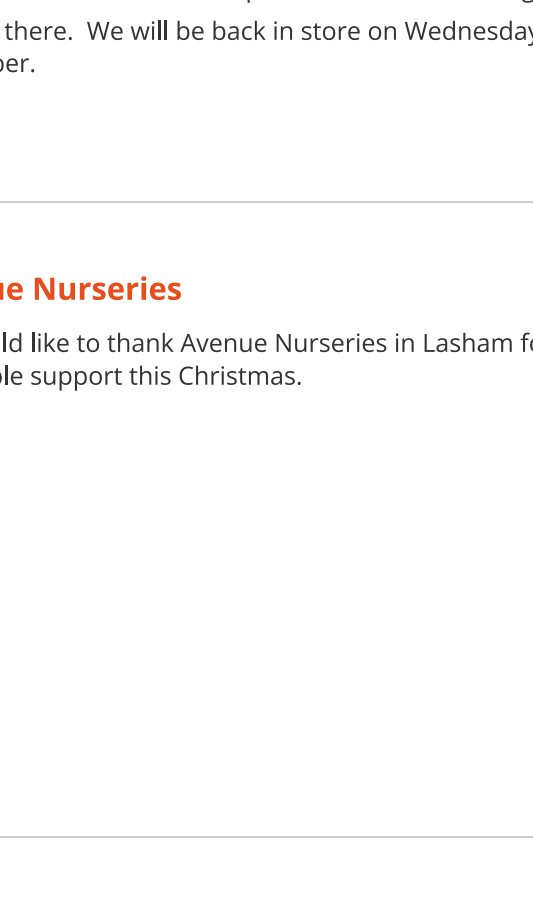


We are always grateful for their ongoing support and have been thrilled to receive 14 OSCAR Advent calendars for our pups at DFA HQ this Christmas. Our dogs have really had fun joining in the somewhat crazy human tradition of opening advent calendar doors! We cannot thank OSCAR enough for their very generous Christmas present for our dogs, which has added some festive enrichment for our pups in what is often a busy period before Christmas.

Throughout the year, OSCAR Pet Foods supply all our dogs with petfood and treats whilst they are in training. Earlier this Summer we were delighted to learn that staff from OSCAR Pet Foods HQ and some franchisee holders joined us on our annual 'Walk a Golden Mile' campaign. There is no end to their fundraising and support, and we look forward to more collaborative work with OSCAR in 2024



This year VidiVet and DFA have worked closely together to offer a discount code to our supporters



In the Autumn, VidiVet and DFA collaborated on a joint social media campaign, 'Paws for a Cause'.

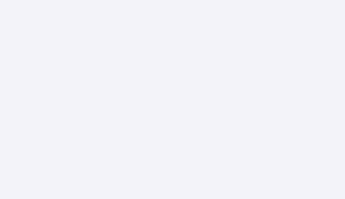
Every VidiVet membership that was sold during the campaign meant a DFA partner could use VidiVet free for a whole year. This was an incredibly generous offer from our partners at VidiVet and helps our puppy parents and partners in situations where advice from emergency vets is needed immediately.

Thank you to everyone at VidiVet.

VidiVet have offered our readers an exclusive discount when you subscribe to their services. The normal annual price is £91.70, but with this offer, you will be signing up for an annual price of only £62. [Click here to grab this deal.](#)



trundl have supported us with nine walks for Dogs for Autism during 2023. The latest trundl for DFA takes place throughout the Christmas period, so it makes for a great excuse to walk the dog everyday until 27<sup>th</sup> December and help us raise funds.

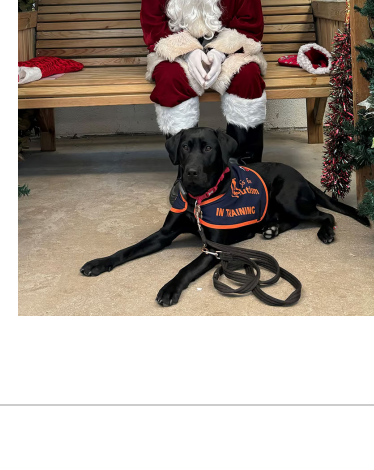


We are delighted to announce that we have partnered with SenLife, a digital companion for the neurodiverse community. SenLife is a new company who have developed an app and online hub for the ND community and their families. The app will plan, track and learn strategies that are best suited to the partner and become a vital resource hub for parents to the carers.

Find out more: <https://mysenlife.com/>

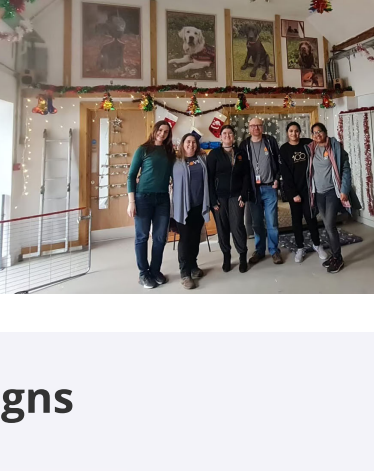
## Fundraising and Campaigns

### Community Fundraising...



#### Haskins - Forest Lodge - Farnham

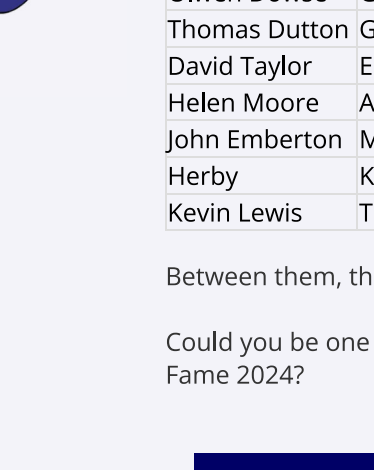
We are so excited that The Forest Lodge Garden Centre have chosen to support us again in 2024 and will continue to fundraise for us throughout the year.



#### Pets at Home

Pets at Home in Alton are almost at the end of their Christmas Santa Paws Campaign. We have been in store raising funds and the fabulous staff have been asking for donations for Dogs for Autism and The Pets at Home Foundation at the till.

If you are local to Alton, Hampshire we would be delighted to see you there. We will be back in store on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December.



#### Avenue Nurseries

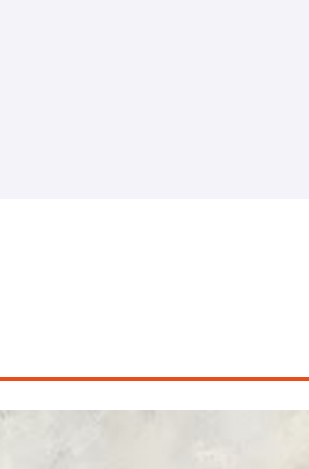
We would like to thank Avenue Nurseries in Lasham for their incredible support this Christmas.



#### Discover.com

Some volunteers from Discover.com very generously gave up their time last Friday to come and decorate our Training Centre ready for the Volunteers get together that evening. They did the most incredible job using decorations that they and others had kindly donated

## Campaigns



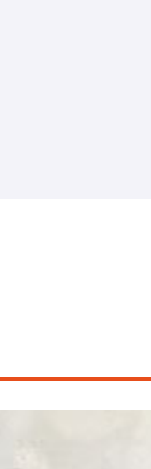
We are absolutely delighted that the following people made it into our Heroes Hall of Fame this year:

Jason Lovett	Cameron Dougal
Chantelle Riddle	Jamie Testa
Olwen Dowse	Gillian Drake
Thomas Dutton	Gill Dennett
David Taylor	Elisa Bygrave-Singht
Helen Moore	Amanda Culley
John Emberton	Michael Homer
Herby	Keith, Jo and Kameron Lambert
Kevin Lewis	The 1st Iwer Scout Group

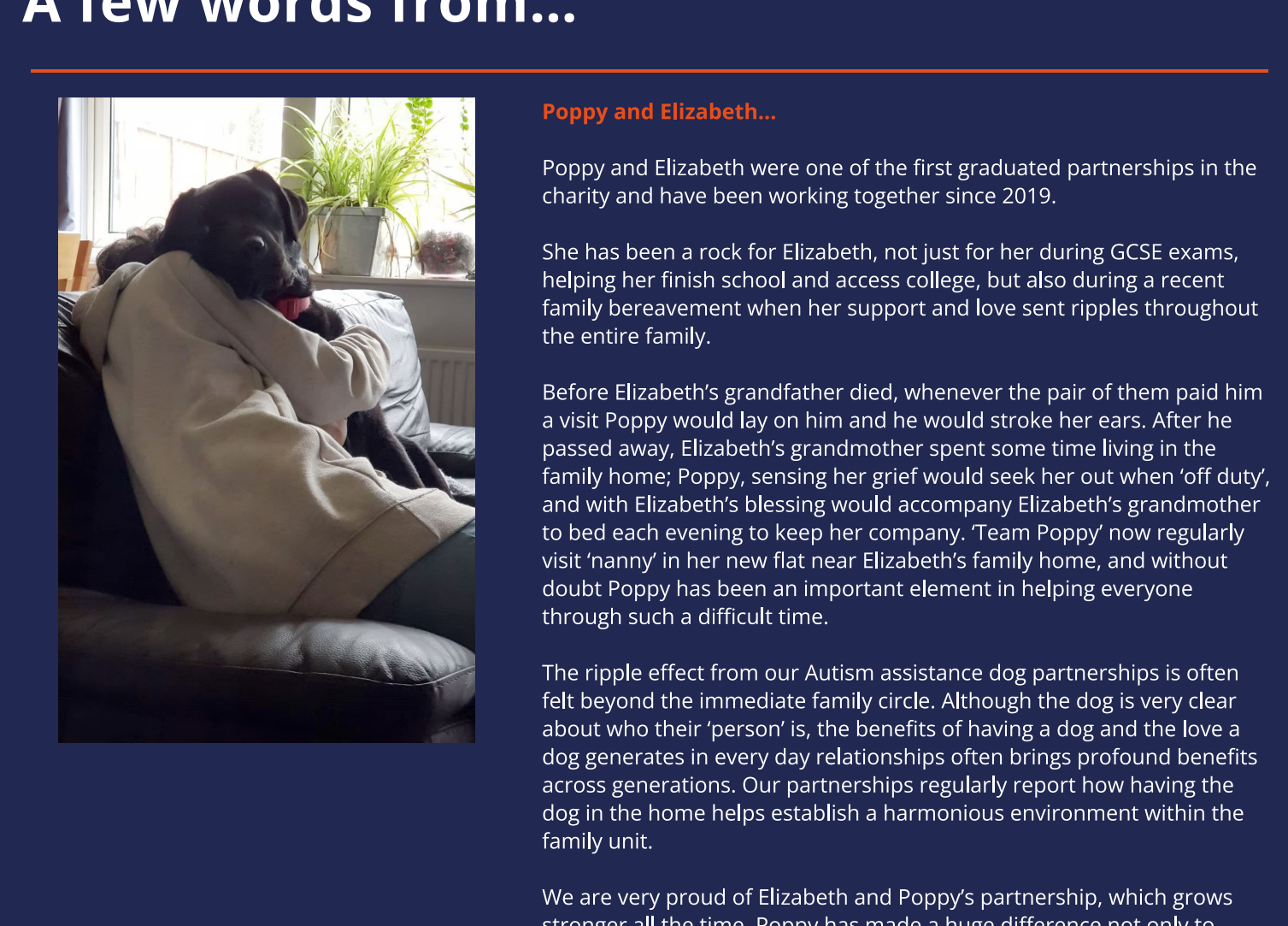
Between them, they have raised a sensational **£25,693**.

Could you be one of our Heroes next year and join our 100 Heroes Hall of Fame 2024?

[Start your fundraiser now](#)



## Upcoming Events



### Crufts 2024

7-10<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Come and visit us in Hall 5 at Crufts next year!

## A few words from...



#### Poppy and Elizabeth...

Poppy and Elizabeth were one of the first graduated partnerships in the charity and have been working together since 2019.

She has been a rock for Elizabeth, not just for her during GCSE exams, helping her finish school and access college, but also during a recent family bereavement when her support and love sent ripples throughout the entire family.

Before Elizabeth's grandfather died, whenever the pair of them paid him a visit Poppy would lay on him and he would stroke her ears. After he passed away, Elizabeth's grandmother spent some time living in the family home. Poppy, sensing her grief would seek her out when 'off duty', and with Elizabeth's blessing would accompany Elizabeth's grandmother to bed each evening to keep her company. 'Team Poppy' now regularly visit 'manny' in her new flat near Elizabeth's family home, and without doubt Poppy has been an important element in helping everyone through such a difficult time.

The ripple effect from our Autism assistance dog partnerships is often felt beyond the immediate family circle. Although the dog is very clear about who their person is, the benefits of having a dog and the love a dog generates in every day relationships often brings profound benefits across generations. Our partnerships regularly report how having the dog in the home helps establish a harmonious environment within the family unit.

We are very proud of Elizabeth and Poppy's partnership, which grows stronger all the time. Poppy has made a huge difference not only to Elizabeth but to the whole family.

## Don't forget...

You can help us everyday when you select us and use any of these household names



[Pets at Home VIP Lifeline](#)



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