



MEET MITCH!

Mitch is an 11 year old beagle. He's also a therapist.

Therapets and their owners regularly visit hospitals, day centres and nursing homes, as well as special needs schools, where the pets provide a little four-legged therapy and companionship to animal lovers who aren't able to care for a pet full-time.

Mitch and his owner Liz will be in the Hospice every Tuesday afternoon to meet anyone from our inpatient or outpatient services who would like a wee cuddle or just to have a chat.

We caught up with Liz to find out more about Mitch and why she thought he'd make the perfect Therapet:

"Mitch and I used to go beagle racing at Kincardine, where he would don his racing jacket and chase a lure; he absolutely loved it.

"We then got involved in Dog Agility and used to travel as far afield as Aberdeen and County Durham to compete. Mitch was very good at Agility and won lots of competitions; he was even awarded the Kennel Club's highest Agility accolade of a Gold Certificate. His Sunday name is his Kennel Club name: Molesend Brewer AW(G) ... very posh!

"A family friend is a Therapet volunteer and after chatting to her about it, I thought it would be a very useful way to spend some of my time.

"Mitch has always been a good boy and is well-behaved for a Beagle. He is a very laid back chap and not overly excitable (unless treats are involved), he's calm around strangers and likes to be made a fuss of, so I thought we would see how he gets on. So far, he has been perfect.

"I enjoy seeing the staff interact with Mitch, he is quite the wee star to them. I like providing the patients and their visitors with a little distraction, albeit for a very short time, and everyone seems to enjoy Mitch's company.

"To anyone who is considering registering their dog as a Therapet or volunteering with St Andrew's Hospice, I simply say give it a try; you have nothing to lose and everything to gain."

by Wendy Cowper,
Acting Quality
& Governance
Manager