

Meet Hillcrest volunteer – Fiona Fair

Fiona started volunteering at Hillcrest in 2016 after the loss of her much-loved greyhound Dolly

Why did you volunteer for GRW?



My first day

I met Sandra Wynne at Hillcrest when we went to donate Dolly's beds and coats after she died. This was my first contact with GRW and I thought Hillcrest rescue and re-homing centre was something very special. Sandra kindly suggested that I joined the GRW Supporters Group on Facebook as it might help with my grieving for Dolly. It was wonderful to see the stories of the rehomed greyhounds and to find out more about the dogs currently at Hillcrest. When GRW asked for volunteers in 2016 I

jumped at the chance to be part of this wonderful organisation, and to be with dogs on a regular basis.

Could you tell us a bit about what you get from this role?

I volunteer at Hillcrest once a week and it is the highlight of my week. As yet we have not adopted another dog, so this is my chance to interact with and enjoy the company of dogs. I really enjoy seeing the dogs start to come out of their shells and their personalities coming to life. I get to play with the dogs in our outdoor enclosure and start to do a little bit of training with them. A lot of the dogs don't know how to play with a toy when they first arrive, so it's great to see them enjoy running for a ball and bringing it back to you. I'm amazed how good some of them are at agility and how much they love doing it.

I enjoy being around the dogs and even simple things like preparing their dinners and washing their bowls up is a pleasure.

I find my time at Hillcrest so rewarding, I learn so much from being with the dogs and with the full-time staff.

Any memorable incidents you can tell us about?



On my very first volunteering session at Hillcrest I bought up some goodies for the dogs and staff (scones and doughnuts for the staff and cheese for the dogs).

I thought I had put them in a safe place out of the reach of any dog in the kitchen. At the end of the session I asked if they had seen the goodies, only the cheese was there, but there were some plastic wrappers on the floor! One of the dogs staying in the house had managed to get up to the bag and eaten all the doughnuts and scones and left the cheese unopened! Needless to say, I'm now very careful where I put any goodies for the staff as there are some very cunning and stealthy hounds who just love the challenge of getting to a tasty morsel!