

## 2 Heart of the Community

We have stores and vet practices over the length and breadth of the UK and we aim to contribute positively towards the wellbeing of our local communities.

### Educating the next generation of pet owners

**We understand that pets add immeasurably to our lives and in return we believe it is essential that a prospective pet owner understands the needs of a pet and can provide for them fully before taking on the long-term responsibility of pet ownership.**

For children in particular a new pet can be particularly thrilling, so to make them aware of the responsibility that comes with a new pet, we have developed a programme of workshop events which we call "My Pet Pals". These are free to attend and parents can book their children onto one of the workshops using our online booking platform. Over the course of the year, more than 102,000 people registered to take part in one of our workshops which cover aquatics, small mammals and reptiles.

We have also built strong relationships with organisations like the Scouting Association, where we sponsor the Beavers' Animal Friend and the Cubs' Animal Carer badges, the Girlguiding Association, and the RSPB where we collaborate on wild bird workshops and support the annual Big Garden Birdwatch campaign.

We recognise the contribution of our colleagues in delivering these community-based initiatives and reward their achievement through an internal programme 'My Pond League'. This year our colleagues delivered a message about responsible pet ownership to more than 600 groups of Scouts, Guides, Brownies and Beavers and engaged with 400 schools.

### Providing a second chance of happiness for less fortunate pets

**Sadly, through no fault of their own, not every pet is able to enjoy a permanent loving home. For these pets rescue and rehoming centres offer a vital second chance of happiness.**

In 2006 Pets at Home established the charity Support Adoption For Pets which provides rehoming centres in our stores and funding for organisations who rescue and rehome domestic pets. The charity has grown to be one of the largest in its sector. Our colleagues care for pets in the Support Adoption For Pets rehoming centres in our stores and make sure we apply the same diligence to the adoption of a pet as we do to the sale of a pet.

Our stores are encouraged to form partnerships with local rescue and rehoming centres whereby store teams and rescue volunteers work together to promote the work of the rescue within the community, highlight pets in need of new homes and raise valuable funds.

Over the past year our colleagues have supported a number of fundraising drives which have benefitted Support Adoption For Pets and their local partnered organisations. The biggest fundraising event of the year is the Santa Paws appeal. Through the efforts of our colleagues and the generosity of our customers, more than £1 million was raised this year, enough to provide more than two million meals for pets in rescue centres around the country. Over the year as a whole £3.8m was raised, allowing Support Adoption For Pets to support 1,000 charities.

**£3.8m**

raised for Support Adoption For Pets



### Providing Lifelines to local and national charities



**Through our VIP loyalty scheme customers can generate 'lifelines' rewards from their purchases. Lifelines are donated to animal charities nominated by our customers which can be used to purchase food and accessories from our stores.**

We aim to grow the value of lifelines donated in line with our sales growth. This year £2 million worth of lifelines was donated, bringing the total value of lifelines donated to more than £6.25 million since the scheme was launched.

#### Supporting the work of the Dogs Trust

We continue to provide support to the Dogs Trust with donations of Wainwrights dog food so that every dog rehomed goes to its new home with a healthy and nutritious diet. This year more than £450,000 worth of food was requested by the Dogs Trust.



### Community Vet of Choice

**Many of our vet practices are already embedded within their local community, having strong links to animal charities and rehoming centres in the area.**

In May 2016 we launched 'Community Vet of Choice' to help our veterinary practices become a vital and treasured part of their community. We provide vets with materials to support their engagement with pet owners and with local animal organisations. Vets have been particularly keen to embrace opportunities to help pet owners understand issues like firework anxiety and suggest appropriate strategies to help them and their pets deal with the stress fireworks can cause. Firework anxiety workshops were run by 176 practices in the first year. Pet First Aid workshops were also popular, with 60 practices running these workshops. Work is underway to encourage further participation among our Joint Venture partners and to develop additional workshops that vets can provide locally.

**60**

of our vet practices ran Pet First Aid workshops in 2016

**176**

of our vet practices ran Firework Anxiety workshops in 2016

