

The Benefits of Being a Host by a Host



Hello, my name is Cathy and I am a host for Barking Mad which I have been for some time now. All the hosts at Barking Mad are passionate about dogs and we all believe that dogs benefit from being in a home environment with one to one care whilst their owners are away. Relaxed, contented and happy dogs are to us a job well done. I have to say though the benefits I have gained from being a host is not just about job satisfaction. What all the dogs I have looked after have done for me, on a personal level, far outweighs the service that I provide for them.

Not long before I became a host, I was at a very low ebb in my life. Two years previously, I lost both my husband and our dog, Dougal, within six months of each other. I was struggling to cope as all three of us did everything together.

I have two grown-up children who, unfortunately, both live away from Grantham. I visit them regularly and being with them when my husband first passed away was such a great help to me. The problem was when I returned

home, all that welcomed me was an empty house which made me feel lonely and isolated. Well, that is now history, as I was reading Grantham Now! magazine and saw the advertorial on Barking Mad. I am unable to commit to having a dog full-time so I thought that being a host could be a perfect solution for me, and I can confirm it is.

I called Jacqui the next day although I felt shy and nervous, especially as I knew I would have to have an assessment. However, Jacqui was lovely and put me at ease straight away. Jacqui came to my home a week later and I passed the assessment with flying colours and was soon matched with my first dog, Trixie, who I am pleased to say is now one of my regulars I host for.

Being a host has given my life a whole new purpose. The dogs have got me out walking which I had stopped doing after I lost Dougal. I had forgotten how much I really enjoyed walking and it is also good for my health and wellbeing. I have made some wonderful new friends and feel part of a community of dog walkers. I often meet friends who have dogs at the park café to sit outside and have a coffee and a chat. I also go out to dinner with some of the friends I have made so my social life is full and happy. I am also discussing going on holiday with one of my 'doggy friends' which is great.

The most benefits from being a host are the dogs themselves as they have brought back fun, laughter, love and companionship in my life once again, and I will always be grateful to the dogs and Barking Mad.

You do not have to be in the same situation as me to become a host as people become hosts for all sorts of reasons affording them similar benefits to me.

If you are interested in becoming a member of our team, then please call or email Jacqui or Colin and see what benefits looking after a furry four-legged friend can do for you.

Contact Colin & Jacqui Murphy
Call 07384 252 920 or 01636 302636
Or email murphy@barkingmad.uk.com

Information for potential Barking Mad Hosts

A home visit is carried out to check on security and take photographs to put owners' minds at ease and to create a visual record for Barking Mad's files.

Hosts can have a family dog and Barking Mad will ensure that their identified host dog meets their dog prior to any stay to make sure that they are comfortable with each other.

Hosts can have children but, for safety reasons, they must be over five years of age.

Owners do not meet their host family as Barking Mad will ensure that the required information, meetings and resources such as beds and food are provided to the host.

Hosts will have 24-hour emergency cover if needed.

Hosts will never be asked to have two dogs from different homes.