



THE HARTBEAT CHRISTMAS 2015

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Hello one and all, hope you've all had a good year! Can I first apologise for the missing newsletters, what a year we've had, I can't believe the volume of animals needing help for so many different and genuine reasons. We as we always do have had a fantastic baby bird and orphaned baby animal season! It's obvious to us that the word has gone round that "*Oh! Hollytrees will always take on such cases!*", and that's just how we are. Believe me I for one always have something to learn, so many different species needing different types of food, and as all the animals that we take in, especially the wildlife, they need *Constant Regular* feeding as well as handling, or in some cases *No Handling*, no way should the wild animals be handled. It's so rewarding!

I've had a real true genuine rescue this year I must tell you about it, back in August we had a gentleman who is wheelchair bound who takes himself twice daily around *Kingsbury Water Park* with his canine companion which he had off us a few years ago, another unusual situation where I feel things are meant to be. Firstly the gentleman got in touch with several other *Rescue Services* to ask for help, he had found what he thought was a young *kestrel* with an injured wing, sadly he was met with all sorts of reasons why they couldn't help him or more importantly the bird, which turned out to be a *Hobby Falcon*, which are very rarely seen.

I can only describe them as a small version of a *Peregrine Falcon*. Eventually someone recommended *Hollytrees* and not being big headed he was impressed with the fact we offered to accept it and help it. I'm so pleased with the way things went, to me it was a young one, this years bird, which was so trusting. I was so impressed with the way it accepted all we were doing for it, we had no idea how long it had been injured, or the extent of it's injuries. We firstly offered the bird diced day old chicks which we buy in frozen, BINGO! It dived into them as good as gold, I had already taped and packed the injured wing which would have alleviated any pain. Luckily enough we have a veterinary practice in Solihull called *AMICUS* who are the *A-Team* when it comes to Birds and Wildlife. They will see anything, anytime and *WOW* do they know their stuff! Nowadays they, along with other vets, use *Digital X-Ray equipment* which instantly shows the image on a screen without having to anaesthetise the animal, it showed that the bird's wings consist of two main bones, one much thinner than the other. Unfortunately the thinner one was broken, luckily it was a fairly clean break. It was decided that the best course of action was to align the bones, once again using the *Digital X-Ray* so as to see exactly what was going on. It was also decided not to strap or bandage the wing to the body, as the larger bone would act as a natural splint. They gave us painkillers and antibiotics in drop form to be put on it's food and prescribed 6 weeks Total rest. No flying at all, peace and quiet and box rest. We did it all to the letter and guess what we think it worked. We've had it slowly jumping on to low perches, and gradually high ones. It's flying in a 30ft aviary confidently, eating really well and not becoming tame. We've also been advised to Winter it in this country just in case it's too much for it to fly or migrate to places like *Africa*.

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Obviously it needs to eat during its journey, catching it's favourite food which is made up mainly of Swallows, Swifts, House Martins etc. with Dragonflies being Top of the bill and at this time of the year these have already migrated.

I've never come across one before, in all the years I've taken birds in. I've yet to find out if it can cope with our winter, even in an aviary and with a continuous supply of food. I hope it works, we will have to wait and see. I am going to see our friends at the **Birmingham Nature Centre**, it might be able to winter there, either way it will get the best. Incidentally that is the **Hobby Falcon** is on our **Christmas card**. That's how steady and trusting it was, obviously we have had to distance ourselves, and it worked a treat, so watch this space.



We've had another really successful baby bird and baby animal year. Every year gets even better than the last one! Literally hundreds of **Pigeons, Blackbirds, Goldfinches, Wrens, Sparrows, Seagulls and the hardest of all Swallows and Swifts.**

We keep the diets as plain as we can, Pigeons and Collared Doves we feed either Weetabix or Ready Brek, making a sloppy mix which we put in a 60ml syringe with a long nozzle or a cake icing syringe, seal the beak around it and squirt it down into the bird's crop, as would the parent bird when they spew the food down into the crop. Pigeons and doves are the only birds to feed this way, we have almost **95%** success rate, and once they start to grow we distance ourselves and nature takes over and we release them here where they have a very busy bird table and the safety of our wooded area next door, as mentioned earlier they also distance themselves from humans.

As with the others birds, blackbirds etc., we use a good quality dried Cat Food, put through a blender and turn it into a powder and again we

make it into a paste and out of the syringe it comes like a worm!! They love it, we also give them a wash down drink of bottled water or rain water, **Never Tap water**. In fact we try not to use tap water on any of our animals and birds.

We humans might be able to cope with the Fluoride etc. in our tap water, but I don't think small animals can, and more importantly the animals and birds prefer it!

We also feed them **Mealworms (Live)** which we buy off the internet and feed with bran, which the birds love, the baby birds, older birds and injured birds are all fed on them and they prove to be the most beneficial diet going.

Sadly the dead Mealworms you can buy dried are completely useless. It's so rewarding to be able to help in such a way although it can be very laborious, the birds are extremely grateful.

We have made full use of a **Human Baby Incubator, donated** by the good people who thought of us whilst stock taking at the

Birmingham Maternity and Woman's Hospital in **Edgbaston**. It's vital to keep a constant temperature at All Times.

We have had Field Mice, Voles, baby Hares (Leverets) baby Rabbits (Graziers), young Deer, injured Cats, Hedgehogs, sick birds, Indeed everything in there!

It is so useful for anything needing that bit of comfort to get over the shock.

One thing I am hoping to purchase this Winter is a small Animal/Bird Hospital Cage made by a company called **Brinsea**.

This would be a more mobile unit which can be carried around and even put by my bedside for through the night feeding etc. This would be ready for next years orphans.

Re-Homing

Can I make an appeal for homes for all the rabbits that we have accumulated over the year. Of course this time of year, going out to feed, clean and look after such critters does not appeal to many children etc.,

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but they need to be cleaned, and handled. I don't like to see rabbits in tiny hutches day in day out, but we've got over 30 needing sensible homes, and we've handled them and sorted them from tamest to the more nervous ones. Some are needing quietist homes without children, some are house rabbits, others are very outgoing and love attention. ***Please Spread the word.*** We also get some hutches donated occasionally. ***As I say to everyone who comes to Hollytrees, "anyone can rescue animals and birds, but the hardest and most important part is to sort the animals problems out, get them stabilised and then to find the right home to suit that particular animal"*** we get there eventually!

We are lucky in the fact we that we have no pressure on us to re-home, and are lucky enough to have a superb team of helpers to get a grip of our inmates. ***Dog trainers from the Solihull Dog Training Club, really understanding, kind but firm people who work well on our dogs, who do need care and understanding.***

A lot of them have been running wild, and causing all sorts of problems for families, a lot of dogs will spot a weak link and take advantage. And I may have mentioned before the problem is only made worse by re-homing problem dogs. I find that they only take so much as regards losing a home that they are happy in.

A spell in the kennels can sort them out to a degree, but then when they go to a new home they can get possessive due to, I feel, the fear of losing the next home.

We were honoured to have had our good friends from West Midlands ***BBC Radio W.M.*** who have always been ***200%*** as far as animals are concerned, all the presenters and indeed the support staff at WM. They have all remained good friends of us at ***Hollytrees.***

What an afternoon we had and what a follow up from their listeners! We had ***Sunny and Shay,*** who were absolutely fantastic with us for the afternoon, they ran their quiz with two members of our helpers, Alan and Annice, with Jane as a backup obviously we were interviewed between

questions. It was really good fun, the quiz was won by Christine and David the other week, who represented ***Hollytrees,*** well done to them!

We had some lovely people turn up, Mandy Honey (Elliot's mom), Pauline our hairdresser who also walks and socialises our rescue dogs, Mandy Bullock and many more.

It was a good meeting.

like the old times, when ***Captain of W.M. Ed Doolan*** ran the ship.

Wow! He sure knew how to do it.

We have got so many fond, happy, exciting and emotional memories of ***Ed's team.***

As you are probably aware ***Ed*** is not enjoying the best of health at the moment, but we are still in touch and as a result of his good work over the years, we have made thousands of good, loving and genuine animal loving friends. After the live broadcast on the Wednesday, ***BBC Radio WM*** had a ***Legendries weekend.*** they invited anyone who had anything to do with the station over the last 40 years, that included some fantastic people, once again so interesting. It also included ***that bloke*** who calls the ***wrong numbers*** out every week on the ***National Lottery,*** I think he is called ***Alan Dediccoat.*** Oh yes, my youngest brother.

Bless Him!



Sunny and Shay Radio W.M.

For those who have donated goodies throughout 2015 we would like to thank you all, no matter how large or small it is all appreciated. We've got a major project ahead of us to rebuild the blocks on the right hand side of the drive as you go down the main back drive.

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They are good in the Summer months,
but are no good in the Winter.



We have been very busy with our animals, mainly dog catching services, covering all over the country. We help animals on ***Doglost UK*** a voluntary group that help animals in need. We help the ones that won't be caught, mainly due to fear. A lot are dogs that come from other countries, i.e. ***Romania, Cyprus and Spain etc.*** Their priority is to escape and run the streets. Another fact is that ***bonfire night, Diwali and New Years celebrations etc.*** just do not help. And are fireworks getting louder or is that my imagination? But at least we are here for them and also for the good people who do their best for the animals. It can be most frustrating for all concerned. That's why I enjoy doing what I do for ***all*** animals and with all the dogs that need catching every one is totally different, both in the situation they are in and their temperaments. ***All need to be dealt with differently.***

It's been very busy, cat wise. Cats and kittens everywhere and in all sorts of situations. Where have they come from? We have all our adult cats and dogs spayed and castrated as a matter of procedure. We have always insisted on this. Why rescue them then send them out to breed more? The puppy/kitten adopters sign a form that states they will get them neutered when they come of age.

Christmas is nearly upon us!! and another New Year around the corner. What on Earth will it bring? Refugees, Russia, Syria. Cuts here, cuts there, no money anywhere. Wait and see. I must close soon, David and Christine do a fantastic job sorting our printing problems. I would like to thank all of our friends who help us at ***Hollytrees***. Whether it is physical help, collecting bric-a-brac and bedding, spreading

the word, home finding and checking. Another thank you goes out to a supplier of our animal beds, both cats and dogs, our friends at ***Pastures New***. They hold classes in Patchwork and Quilting and to date we've received nearly 300 for our animals, see...

www.pasturesnewquilting.com.

Another good connection is our friends from ***Redditch*** who bring in brilliant sized quilts, that as with the others, fit in washing machines perfectly. Incidentally these good people come over and collect our donated quilts and cut them up to put covers on, and as a swap we give them our donated stamps after we're done with them. So keep them coming. One lot we swap for dog and cat food and then they are swapped for bedding, which as I say is washable.

There has been some brilliant work done at ***Hollytrees***. ***Our memory garden*** is almost complete, thanks to ***Tyndallwoods Solicitors*** and ***Rob Meese*** as project manager. An area where one can come and relax and think about a beloved pet they may have lost. Talking of lost can I take a moment to remember those we have lost this year, both human and animal alike.

I salute ***All*** our helpers, college students, volunteers, regulars, Duke of Edinburgh students, not forgetting our regular staff Tracy, Wendy and Adam. What a team! And finally not forgetting my superb family!

All that is left to say is that we have helped a record amount of creatures and you good people have encouraged us to do it!!

Our facilities are still 100%.
We all wish you good people all the very, very best for Christmas and for 2016.

Ray

Merry 
Christmas 