



## Care Home Unveils 1,800 Knitted Poppies



Residents and staff at a Wirral care home knitted 1,800 poppies to commemorate Remembrance Sunday.

The Hazelwell, a residential, nursing, palliative and respite care home in Heswall, involves residents, staff, and friends and family members knitted the woollen poppies as a fitting tribute to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One.

Starting in March, residents, staff and friends and family have spent a total of around 450 hours – or more than 18 days – knitting around 1,800 poppies with it taking an average of 15 minutes to knit each one.

The idea was the ‘brainchild’ of Brenda Newey, the care home’s activities assistant, who came up with the idea as a positive way to honour this year’s special Armistice Day after speaking with residents at the home.

The knitted poppies were attached together on chicken wire in a striking structure which was displayed in a grand unveiling at the front of the care home on 8th November.

Brenda from West Kirby, said: “I came up with the idea after speaking to residents about World War One. Many of them were brought up in the aftermath of the war and grew up hearing stories of war told by their parents, so they felt a real need to commemorate it in some way.

“I had a nutty moment and thought why don’t we try and knit as many poppies as we can. It has been a fantastic way of bringing the community together to pay their respects to those that have fallen. Residents, family members, friends, staff, just about everyone has been involved in knitting a poppy of some sort. Our residents have thoroughly enjoyed working on the project.”



# The Pet Column

By Abbas Hussain of Principal Pets

## Fireworks

Having just been through Bonfire Night, if you’re a pet owner, either a dog or a cat, there’s probably one thing you’re dreading about New Year’s Eve. Fireworks can wreak havoc on dogs and cats. Dogs have sensitive hearing so they can be particularly vulnerable, and many hurt themselves trying to escape or hide. Approximately half of the UK’s dogs seem to have a problem with the loud noises associated with fireworks. Signs that dogs find fireworks challenging include trembling, shaking and cowering.

Cats are masters of disguise so it is harder to tell when they are unhappy, but loud bangs can startle them and they may want to run or hide.

There is plenty that can be done to support pets during fireworks season.

### Prepare a Dog Den

Dog owners should prepare a den for their dogs. Ideally this should be prepared a couple of weeks in advance and somewhere the dog feels safe, such as behind the sofa. Covering the den helps to protect the dog from the noise and flashes of the fireworks. Ensure the dog can access the den at all times. Healthy treats and a toy can help form a positive association with the space. Products such as appeasing pheromones and calming diffusers and sprays can help, but should be started at least a week before New Year’s Eve.

### Cat Hideaway

On New Year’s Eve cats should be kept indoors at night. This change in routine and confinement can cause cats to become upset and show unwanted behaviours such as marking, scratching and inter-cat conflict. Owners can provide a few extra litter trays around the house, to help with marking, and allow access to elevated hiding places and provide a bolthole.

If a cat hides under a bed or in a corner during fireworks, do not be tempted to coax them out as they obviously feel safe and secure in these places.

### On New Year’s Eve

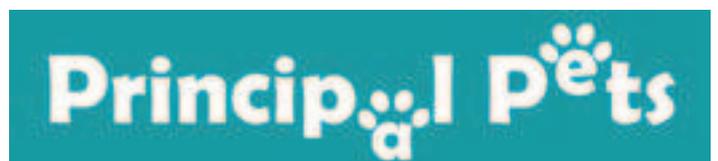
Doors, windows and pet flaps should be secured and curtains drawn to reduce the noise and flashes of the fireworks. Playing music or having the TV on will further help to mask the noise. The lights should also be kept on to further reduce the effect of flashes from the fireworks.

Dog owners should exercise their dogs early in the evening before the fireworks start. If a dog gets worried by a bang and looks to their owner for reassurance, the reassurance should not be too effusive, as this can reinforce the dog’s neuroses. Provide a toy and focus your attention on the toy. If the dog wants to engage it is more likely the negative emotion will be replaced with a positive one.

Finally, a pet should not be punished at any time for their behaviour. If a dog or cat finds fireworks increasingly difficult to deal with, a visit to the vet could help further support their needs with calming medication or a referral to a pet behaviourist.

### Did You Know

Did you know that Collecchio, a town in Italy, has passed a law that fireworks in their town must be silent to reduce stress to all animals in the town – not just pets.



184 Telegraph Road, Heswall CH60 0AJ • Tel: 0151 342 9635  
Email: [info@principalpets.co.uk](mailto:info@principalpets.co.uk) • Web: [www.principalpets.co.uk](http://www.principalpets.co.uk)