

Dear Friend,

When I heard that Graeme was going to write to you for your urgent support, I asked if I could add a few words of my own about why your help is so badly needed today.

Every day brings dozens of dogs and cats to our clinic in need of urgent care. Most are strays from good and loving homes. However, every now and then, the doors of our ambulance open to reveal an animal that has been so shockingly neglected, even my experienced colleagues here in the veterinary clinic are moved.

We've seen some terrible cases of neglect here, some I wouldn't even want you to know about. Those I can mention include a Ridgeback cross that had been intentionally burned, and a dear little dog named Cindy whose ears had been pierced.

On top of these cases of deliberate cruelty, there are the cases of what I call 'cruelty by neglect' – where the owners didn't mean for their pets to suffer, but who suffered all the same because they weren't cared for properly.

It's really upsetting how common these unintentional cases are. Day after day we see them. Most of the time I manage to remain detached – you've got to in my job.

But sometimes, when I'm trying my best to fix the teeth of some gentle old dog who hasn't received a check up in years, or save the life of a cat whose tumour has been left to grow for months, I wonder at how their owners could bear to see them suffer for so long. It can get you down if you let it.

But what really cheers me up is the thought that, actually, there are far more people who care about animals than don't – and that some of the most

wonderful of these people we are proud to be able to call our supporters.

Our supporters make everything we do here possible. They pay for the surgical tools we use every day, the dressings, the medicines – even the x-ray machines that cost so much.

And it's not just the clinic they've helped pay for – it's the whole Home, including the shelter where my wonderful colleagues in the adoption team work so hard to rebuild the mental health of the animals we've already helped to rebuild physically.

But as kind as our supporters are, there is only so much they can afford to do on their own. And as the number of animals who need our help grows, and the costs of providing our care increase, it has now become urgent that other equally kind people step forward to join them today.

That's why I really do hope that you will be able to provide your support today. I know that Graeme is doing his best to drum up the help we need, but without a positive response – well, he's a special guy, but even he can't magic the funds we need out of nowhere.

So please do help if you can. It would mean an awful lot if you could – both to my colleagues and I, and to the many neglected cats and dogs who will be relying on us for their lives over the months and years to come.

Larry Colson
Veterinary Clinic Manager