

# MOVE TO A RETIREMENT SCHEME AND BRING YOUR PET TOO

Pictured: Janet and Izzie



Jane Slade, founder of the retirement property website Retiremove, discovers retirement schemes are offering a big welcome to owners with pets

By Jane Slade, founder and director of the retirement property website Retiremove



**FLORA GRANGE** FROM £170,000 (GUIDELINE PRICE ONLY. RENTAL/PART-BUY PART-RENT ALSO AVAILABLE) [www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk](http://www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk)

“You would see a lot fewer problems in society if we all had an animal to look after – we would all be a lot fitter too!” declares Claire Horton, the CEO of Battersea Dogs and Cats Home which has provided broadcaster Jeremy Paxman with his dog Derek, Question of Sport host Sue Barker with her pooches Baiatu and Charlie and Downing Street’s mouse-catcher Larry.

Having a pet also helps with loneliness and isolation in later life which is why most

retirement developments welcome them.

Richard Costello, 86, adopted his beloved rescue-dog Mucker three years ago after his wife died. They now both live at the McCarthy & Stone Retirement Living development, Calico Court in Glossop, where Mucker has become a star attraction, not only making friends with all the residents, but also around the town.

“When my wife died, I decided to make enquiries about getting a dog and visited a



**RICHARD COSTELLO AND MUCKER**

rescue centre in Wokingham, which is where I lived at the time,” Richard explains.

“Mucker is now part of the Calico Court community,” adds Richard, who has nine children, six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

“All the residents get together for a chat and a drink every Friday, and Mucker makes sure he is a member of the gang. Everyone is delighted to see him and he’s always looking for a stroke and a pat.

“I am delighted I was able to bring Mucker with me. Walking him is fantastic too as it helps keep me fit and active.”

All the apartments at Calico Court are now sold, but in nearby Stannington there is a new development called Flora Grange under construction. Stannington is a quiet, leafy village near Sheffield and within easy reach of the Peak District. [www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk](http://www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk)

Recent research has revealed that Britons love their pets so much they would rather take a break with them than with their friends. Some 19 per cent of people surveyed by the Caravan and Motorhome Show said they would rather enjoy a holiday in Britain with their dog or cat compared with 13 per cent who said they would rather go with friends. And others have said they would not move to a community that didn’t welcome pets.

Caroline Hamilton who is in her early 80s moved from a five-bedroom house in Kew to a two-bed, two-bath apartment at Battersea Place retirement village in London which is right opposite Battersea Park. But she would never have moved there without her beloved Lola who has helped her adapt to her new life.

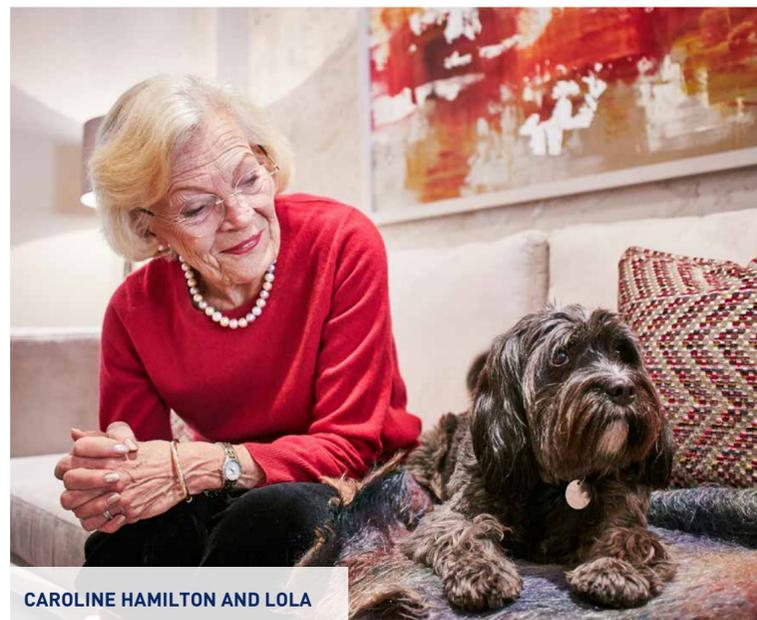
“I would not have bought the flat in Battersea Place if I could not have brought dear Lola with me,” she says. “She was a real help in helping me cope with the enormous change of coming to a new place after 50 years in the same house.

“Having a friendly-looking dog is also a great ice-breaker and, I might add, my GP is

delighted to hear that I walk across the road to the park four times a day (or round the block if it’s very late at night)”. [www.lifecareresidences.co.uk](http://www.lifecareresidences.co.uk)

“Retirement communities are generally very keen for residents to bring pets with them,” says Neil MacKichan of the retirement property website Retiremove. “But they have to be well behaved and they won’t allow you to replace them if they die. Those communities in rural areas usually have great dog-walking trails or landscaped gardens but it’s worth checking how close your nearest walking area is if you are looking to move to a town. [www.retiremove.co.uk](http://www.retiremove.co.uk)

Several retirement schemes are now providing dog-walking services and pet grooming and Audley Retirement will even fit a cat flap if you want. [www.audleyvillages.co.uk](http://www.audleyvillages.co.uk)



**CAROLINE HAMILTON AND LOLA**



**HAMPSHIRE LAKES, YATELEY** FROM £348,000 [www.anchorhanover.org.uk](http://www.anchorhanover.org.uk)

Janet McCombie, age 72, who has an apartment at Anchor-Hanover’s Hampshire Lakes says that her cockapoo Izzie was a life-saver after her husband died.

“It was very difficult to be on my own at first but having Izzie gave me a reason to get up in the morning and a reason to come home,” she says. “The Hampshire Lakes family love her and she’s made a huge difference to my life. Living here has been ideal as there’s plenty of woodland and green spaces for her.”

Hampshire Lakes in Yateley, Hampshire has 74 independent living apartments (one and two bed) and a 36-room care home called Willow Gardens, on site. The second phase of the development will add a further 45 one-and-two-bed apartments which are now available to reserve. [www.anchorhanover.org.uk](http://www.anchorhanover.org.uk)

At Castle View in Windsor, a mere bone’s throw from the corgi-loving Queen’s Windsor Castle, owners are offered a pet-grooming and a dog-walking service. [www.castleviewwindsor.co.uk](http://www.castleviewwindsor.co.uk) “We know how important pets are in their owners’ lives,” says Robin Hughes, CEO of



**BATTERSEA PLACE, LONDON** FROM £650,000 – £3M [www.lifecareresidences.co.uk](http://www.lifecareresidences.co.uk)

Castle Retirement Living, “which is why we want to offer a solution to purchasers who want to downsize, but also have a pet they don’t want to become separated from.”



**CASTLE VIEW WINDSOR** FROM £375,000 [www.castleviewwindsor.co.uk](http://www.castleviewwindsor.co.uk)

And at Elysian Residences which has two schemes in London, The Oren in Hampstead and The Landsby in Stanmore you can book your manicure the same time as your pet’s! [www.elysianresidences.com](http://www.elysianresidences.com)



**THE LANDSBY, STANMORE** FROM £490,000 [www.elysianresidences.com](http://www.elysianresidences.com)

Angela McKimmie, sales and marketing director at Rangeford Villages, which operates pet-friendly Wadswick Green and Mickle Hill retirement schemes, says: “Moving into a new set-up can be very daunting, especially if you are single or widowed. Having a dog or a friendly cat, can encourage people to stop and have a chat with you and provides a great way to make new friends. They also provide fantastic companionship, and we all know the health benefits that a long walk with a dog can do for you.”

Janet and Neil Ainsworth and their cockapoo Honey have no regrets about moving from the Lake District into a £252,000 two-bedroom pavilion apartment at Mickle Hill in North Yorkshire nearly three years ago. “Honey loves the apartment and running on the ground floor patio, she’s so full of energy. She’s a great constant companion, and I’m really happy she was able to move in with us,” enthuses Janet, 76.

The development is also close to plenty of dog-walking areas. “The Dales aren’t far of course, but the sea is only 30 minutes away too,” adds Janet. “We also have the Scarborough Steam train, and Pickering itself is a lovely market town.” [www.rangeford.co.uk](http://www.rangeford.co.uk)



**MICKLE HILL, NORTH YORKSHIRE** FROM £199,950 [www.micklehill.co.uk](http://www.micklehill.co.uk)

John Lavin of Cognatum which has 60 retirement estates in England and Guernsey, adds, “At Cognatum we understand what an important part of life a pet can be. Around 10-15 per cent of our residents own a dog.



**JANET AINSWORTH AND HONEY**

“We encourage pet ownership, having witnessed the health and wellbeing benefits that owning a pet brings. They also bring joy, companionship and laughter, reduce stress, and often help their owners find a routine to their lives.” Cognatum’s Stuart Court development in Oxfordshire even won an award from the pet charity the Cinnamon Trust.

“A pet can help people settle into a new environment, and be a focus for conversation,” adds Mr Lavin. “On average, our estates sit in over two acres of beautiful grounds. Many have areas of woodland or pasture, and access to rivers and streams.



**STUART COURT, MINCHINHAMPTON** FROM £695,000 - 745,000 [www.cognatum.co.uk](http://www.cognatum.co.uk)



**Dasos Christou and Roxy - Silva Homes**

Housing Secretary, Robert Jenrick MP, has called on landlords to make it easier for responsible tenants to have well behaved pets in their homes as the Government overhaul model tenancy contracts.

Housing association, Silva Homes, which manages 7,400 rented, leasehold and shared-ownership properties across the South East, have recently updated their pet policy to allow pets into most of its homes, providing they are well looked after and do not cause a nuisance to others.

Silva Homes Executive Director, Dasos Christou explains why the housing association has updated its pet policy:

“When people are looking for a new home, either to rent or buy through shared-ownership, the thought of not being able to have a pet, or even bring their current pet to their new home, can be extremely traumatic.

“We have reshaped our pet policy so that it works with, rather than against, the needs of our customers. As soon as it became clear that there was majority demand for a new pet policy, we began to plan how we could go about implementing the change.

“Now, every application for a pet will be looked at on its own merit and so long as there are no major issues which would impact on the animal or surrounding residents, we will happily give the go-ahead.”

For further information please email [silvahomes@social.co.uk](mailto:silvahomes@social.co.uk) or call 0117 926 9945

“Another advantage is that friendly neighbours will give you support if you fall ill. They will be the ones to provide back-up care – take your dog for a walk, or pop in for feeding and companionship if an owner is temporarily unavailable. In fact there can be quite fierce offers and counter offers of help; good neighbourliness is a strong feature of life in most retirement communities.” [www.cognatum.co.uk](http://www.cognatum.co.uk)