Dear Loving Pet Owner

**Please give £3 to help keep Bongo or Jess for a day**

**Text BONGO3 or JESS3 to 88123 NOW**

**Bongo is always overlooked** by the people who come to take a rescue dog home. But, rightly so. His breeding and background requires the careful love and understanding of an experienced owner. We have **a strict non-destruction policy** so he’s likely to be with us for some time. But doesn’t he deserve to be as well looked after as your dog?

Bongo didn’t ask to be born a Staffordshire bull terrier cross. He didn’t ask to be bred to fight, or be kicked or hit with a stick if he didn’t fight hard enough.

**Jess is FIV positive.** Unhelpfully described as 'Feline Aids',
FIV understandably strikes fear in the hearts of many cat owners. The truth is that FIV in cats living normal lives, tends to be benign, and may never cause illness or be passed from cat to cat. Jess just wants to be one of those cats. It is **not** possible for FIV to be transmitted to humans or other animals, so we wait for someone who’s prepared to love her for who she is; an affectionate and gentle cat who adores attention and company.

**Bongo and Jess can’t speak for themselves, so it falls to me to ask for your help.**

You know the cost and time commitment it takes to keep just one or two (or more) pets. Even with the very generous discounts our vets offer us, the medical expenses and cost of just feeding the animals add up. And they seem to get more and more expensive every year, don’t they?

**It’s not just medication, bed & board**

Sadly there just isn’t enough kind and loving pet lovers like you to take in the large number irresponsibly bred cats and dogs. To stop this cycle, we make it a priority to **neuter every cat or dog** that isn’t reunited with their owners.

We also **microchip** every pet before it’s rehomed. So if they ever went missing again, it’s so much easier to get them home; with the minimum of stress to both pet and owner!

**Fun stuff too**

But also we like to make their stay at Oldingham as loving and pleasurable as possible. It’s what they deserve. Apart from his twice daily walks across the fields, **Bongo’s favourite thing** is one of those red rubber dog toys with treats, or occasionally a little peanut butter, inside. Hours of intense concentration to chew and work his way into the corners to get that last little bit of peanut butter. They say they’re super-durable, but Bongo thinks it fun to prove them wrong!

**Jess loves** to be stroked and gives off a deafening purr when being groomed by her favourite human, Kate. She also likes to play hide and seek!

**Please help us raise over £150,000 per year**Give just £3 by texting BONGO3 or JESS3 to 88123 NOW

We cannot continue our work without your help to raise a minimum £150,000 each year. That’s a lot of money, but every pound helps. When you think about it, if each of the 4,000 residents of Oldingham gave just £3 per month, we’d have it covered.

**We are a registered charity** and rely entirely on your donations to keep us afloat – to keep the 800 cats or dogs who find themselves here each year … well … alive.

We look after lost pets – waiting to be reunited with their loving owners, like you.

But sadly, we also rescue dogs and cats like Bongo and Jess that have been abandoned and, worse, mistreated. It’s just inconceivable why anyone would want to neglect or be cruel to animals. But they do. And it’s our job to take these animals in; to give them the chance of a safe, happy and healthy life.

**Why can’t we just re-home them all?**

We are particularly successful at matching abandoned or sick animals with loving homes.

But some poor animals come with a fear and mistrust humans – and wouldn’t you if you’d only ever been touched in a hurtful way? Even if you only meant to give Bongo a friendly stroke or pat, he’d be expecting you to hit him or cause him pain. Experience has taught him that and, without thinking, he might try to defend himself before letting you get close to him.

Aggression in any animal is the product of frustration and helplessness, so it takes a very special person with experience of dealing with a dog like Bongo to take him into their home. In the meantime, we’re here to help him rebuild his trust in us and learn to expect kindness rather than cruelty. Once over this crucial hurdle, it never ceases to amaze me how willing they are to see the good in humans. One day, Bongo will make a lovely family pet, true to his breed– a courageous, obedient and loyal friend.

**Every penny goes towards the upkeep of Oldingham Cats and Dogs Home and the relentless but rewarding job of looking after the animals. I take no salary from the home. I’m helped by volunteers and the vets work at reduced rates. But the cost of medications, food, comfy bedding and toys just keeps on rising.**

**You’ve got a Friend in me**

If you can afford to set **up direct debit for £3 every month**, then the animals and I would be proud to call you our Friend. Small, but regular amounts can make a big difference. In return, Friends enjoy a monthly newsletter with all the stories our cats and dogs have to tell: some funny, some sad, but mostly happy endings. **You’ll also receive an ID card which will entitle you to a free cup of tea every time you visit our café.**

You can set up a regular donation online **at oldinghamcatsanddogs.com** or call me on **0800 123 8123**.

If you can’t commit to a regular payment, then I’d be very grateful for anything you can afford right now.

**Please text BONGO3 to 88123 to donate £3 to the Kennels. Or JESS3 to 88123 to donate £3 to the Cattery. This is a one-off payment, but do feel free to do it as many times as you like!**

And when you receive my reply, make sure you claim **Gift Aid** to get HMRC to add another 25% to your donation.

THANK YOU!

Mike Blatch
Managing Director

**PS … Summer Fun at Oldingham Cats and Dogs Home Annual Fete**

See for yourself how your generous donations are helping to save and rehabilitate Oldingham’s cats and dogs.

Join us for an open day and Fete on **Saturday 5th July** when we’ll be holding a fun dog show, of course. And there’s plenty more to do, including tombola, coconut shy, bouncy castle and face painting. They’ll be shopping opportunities too – local crafts, plants and gift stalls, plus Dan’s Petshop will be there offering a 10% discount plus a further 10% donation to us on everything you buy.

We’ll keep you fed and watered too with a barbecue, beer tent and yummy tea and cakes from our café. And this year, we’re delighted to present the Oldingham Brass Band who’ll be keeping us singing and bobbing up and down to classic tunes, old and new.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Oldingham Cats and Dogs Home, Mill Lane, Oldingham CD1 3OU. [www.oldinghamcatsanddogshome.com](http://www.oldinghamcatsanddogshome.com)
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