

NORTH DEVON JOURNAL

Thursday, December 27, 2018 DevonLive.com £1.30



Meet Vader, the remarkable rescue dog who is helping to teach children about empathy, responsibility and kindness



»Vader is pictured on Saunton beach during a recent photo shoot for Dogs Helping Kids [See Page 16](#)

INSIDE



Keira's legacy is put into law

» New legislation on organ donation renamed in honour of North Devon girl [Page 4](#)

INSIDE



» Taxpayers could see cost of policing our double [Page 5](#)

No new lifeline for historic shipyard

» Government will not chase a deal which has potential to save under-threat Appledore Shipyard from closure [Page 3](#)



**Agency Nurses & Carers
Recruiting Now!**

01271 452003
www.oceanhealthcare.co.uk

Vader's Tail: Incredibly busy time of workshops and photo shoots



» Vader on Saunton Beach where he took part in a photo shoot. Vader has had a busy time working with Dog Helping Kids school dog workshops

The Blue Cross

husband and I met him for the very first time in July 2014. The Blue Cross have always wanted to do a story on Vader, but they were waiting for him to undertake the three-year DHK training programme, pass all eight assessments, and be a fully working certified support dog. Now that he works with teenagers on the autistic spectrum and those with mental health issues, they were incredibly keen to meet the rescue puppy who left them more than four years ago now and see what he is achieving.

Two members of staff from the Blue Cross spent the whole day with Vader. They watched him undertake his important charity work; they did a big photo shoot both at the DHK HQ and on Saunton Beach, and interviewed myself and my husband to find out all about his work with the charity, and what Vader is also like to live with.

They did some filming to show Vader's life story in a minute, which will feature on social media to promote the Blue Cross, as well as writing a feature article on Vader that will appear on its website, as well as in the next edition of its For Pets magazine which will be out in March 2019.

Aimee Brannam, from the Blue Cross, who came to North Devon to meet Vader, said: "I was totally blown away by what you do and the incredibly hard work that you put in to make it all happen. Vader is certainly a testament to that, and is an amazing dog - it was so wonderful to see what he has achieved and how brilliantly happy he is with you and Mark. He really is a very lucky boy."

"Vader looks like a top dog model in all the photos, especially in the beach shots. What an absolute star. The Blue Cross couldn't be prouder of what he has achieved."

On this happy note, Vader would like to wish all of his readers a really great New Year, and thank you so much for reading his column.

Tracey Berridge is founder and chief executive of Dogs Helping Kids

by TRACEY BERRIDGE

IT'S been an incredibly busy few months for Vader; from helping out on two busy Dog Helping Kids (DHK) school dog workshops to working with and helping teenagers such as Harry - all in the life of a DHK certified school dog.

There have been two DHK school dog workshops which were really busy with delegates coming from Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Bath and Kent.

Vader enjoyed meeting them all and spent time with Bailey, a labradoodle from Ledbury, Percy, a spaniel from Exeter, Jess, a lurcher from Gloucester and Tango, a Labrador from Bristol, who were all here for more training and assessments; as well as three lovely puppies, Tilly, a Labrador from Yeovil, Emmett, a labradoodle from Oxford, and Heidi, a spoodle from Liverpool, who had

all come for puppy training days.

Vader loves going away and was thrilled when we took some time off for a few days in one of our favourite places in Cornwall, Boscastle.

We spent time going for walks in the beautiful Valency Valley, enjoying coastal walks, and having beach fun at the breathtaking Trebarwith Strand. Vader has also had a great time helping us dog sit five dogs who he knows really well in Tiverton, and for the first time ever, he had a beach walk with one of his best doggy friends Skip, the border terrier - and wow did they have fun!

However, the highlight of the past few weeks has to be a photo shoot and big interview with the Blue Cross animal charity. Vader was rescued as a puppy by the Blue Cross from travellers in Ireland and a few weeks later found himself at its Bromsgrove Rescue Centre in Birmingham, where my



THE FOOD AND DRINK AND ROCK AND ROLL TOUR



Tickets on sale 1 February. For priority booking on 31 January, sign up to the newsletter at

PUBINTHEPARKUK.COM



Follow us [social media icons]



» Vader reading with a teenager

The Blue Cross