

## **Mentorship Programme for new dog trainers/walkers and pet sitters**

### **About Us:**

Friendly Creatures is a long-established animal behaviour and dog training company based in Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, Hackney and beyond. It was founded by Lydia Burke in 2010. Lydia grew up with the family's unruly rescue dogs and cats so as a young teenager read training books and set about trying to train them all. As a teenager she started working on a Devon sheep farm/riding centre and her passion for understanding dog, cat and horse behaviour grew. After a successful nursing and lecturing career, competing in dog agility & training horses in her spare time, she quit and founded Friendly Creatures. Her training with the Institute of Modern Dog Trainers cemented her passion for force-free non-aversive training methods. Amazing trainers came to work with her, all with the same philosophy.

We believe being with your pet should be enjoyable, and the animal should find enjoyment and security with us. We talk about relaxation and the bond more than about rigid obedience skills. Once the bond is there, and the owner understands what their animal is feeling, then training can progress in any field the owner wishes.

### **Our Services:**

We provide a wide-range of services which you will be invited to participate in – both observing and eventually teaching with supervision.

- Group puppy training courses, group Improver courses, Group obedience courses, group agility (beginners and improvers).
- Group one-off 2 hour sessions (recall, nice lead walking, trick training, clicker training, canine body language, nose work etc)
- 121s for puppy settling in. 121s for puppy/dog training issues. 121s for behaviour issues (such as anxiety, aggression, separation issues, resource guarding etc)
- Solo dog walking with training
- Cat behaviour help (indoor marking/toileting, aggression, hiding, excessive grooming, fighting, staying away etc)

### **How it works:**

You complete a basic introductory course - eg 2 Day Career as a Dog Trainer (IMDT), or Level 2 Animal Care. (Please discuss this with us if you are not sure which course to complete).

You then need to complete our application form and be interviewed by us. Once you have had a successful interview, we will map out the year ahead with suggestions on further formal qualifications. We will then give you the opportunity to observe twelve group classes and/or 121 sessions followed by feedback sessions. You will have frequent contact with your mentor, via a Zoom or WhatsApp call every two weeks. You will be encouraged to volunteer or work in your chosen field and we will supervise you. We offer help with all the early issues when starting your new role, eg consultation skills, bounded client interactions, an understanding of problem animal behaviour, marketing and self-promotion, health and safety at work etc

As the year progresses, you will develop expertise and confidence in all aspects of pet care related to your chosen career pathway. You will have your own client feedback and testimonials to put on your website. At the end of the twelve months, we will help you summarise your achievements and look at any areas where further experience or training is needed. You should then be fully equipped to take the IMDT assessments or complete other related qualifications.

Completion of the Mentorship Scheme allows you to display the Friendly Creatures logo on your profile and website and we can provide references to vouch for your competence.

Further information available by request to: [lydia@friendly-creatures.co.uk](mailto:lydia@friendly-creatures.co.uk) or tel: 07754155286