



Above: Little Buddy above, and Daisy below, receiving emergency oxygen after being rushed into Seadown's Hythe hospital

Against All Odds: The Fire Dogs

How two beautiful dogs, Buddy and Daisy survived a house fire!



A young family returned home to find their electric wasn't working. Looking around they realised that there had been an electric fire and their two beloved family dogs, Buddy and Daisy lay motionless on the conservatory floor, completely black with soot.

Ruth Porter, owner of Buddy and Daisy takes up the story *'It was a horrible cold and rainy day and the whole situation was a complete nightmare. We returned home from work with our little girl and quickly realised that there had been an electric house fire which luckily hadn't travelled throughout the house because the doors were shut. However, we found our two beautiful dogs motionless on the floor of the conservatory. I thought they were dead. Whilst I tried to shield my little girl from the horror of it all, I called the Fire Brigade and Robert scooped up the dogs into the garden. Buddy a 5 year old Bijon Frise, was very softly breathing but seemed better than our rescue Daisy, a 6 year old Bearded Collie x Wolfhound who was completely still. Robert immediately started rubbing Daisy's chest and back and noticing she had swallowed her tongue pulled it out from the back of her throat. I am convinced he helped save her life. Knocking on a neighbours door for a torch, we put both dogs in my car and I drove to Seadown.*

I must have looked like a mad woman when I arrived because I was soaked, covered in soot, lost my shoes but all I could think about was Buddy and Daisy. By this time Buddy was conscious but Daisy was lifeless and barely breathing. Seadown were amazing and came rushing to help'.

Sophi Dolbear, was the Seadown vet on duty when Buddy and Daisy were rushed into the Hythe hospital, she continues *'It was quite a quiet Saturday morning when we were alerted by our reception staff that a lady was bringing two dogs. The poor dogs arrived in a very sorry state and were completely black!*

Daisy was unresponsive when she was carried in, Buddy was slightly more alert but both dogs were in a bad way. The whole team of 4 vets & 3 nurses quickly set to work providing oxygen via face mask & assessing any injuries. The carbon monoxide exposure from the fire causes the gums to go a very dark brick red, so oxygen supplementation is the most important treatment initially to reverse this. Thankfully neither dog had any thermal burns to their skin, nor ulcers to their eyes (common injuries seen & in the case of thermal burns; attribute to a much poorer long term prognosis). We then worked to wash the soot off them both..



Above: Little Buddy sits patiently whilst Seadown vets and nurse Hayley, wash off his sooty black coat and return it to its natural white

Buddy responded very well to the oxygen & was much more alert, Daisy was the one we were more worried about. We could hear that her lungs had been severely affected by the smoke inhalation (confirmed on X-Ray); the hot smoke can cause severe swelling of the airways, which can be fatal. We gave her bronchodilators, which would help open up the airway as much as possible.

We kept the owners updated with progress and were pleased with the initial improvement they showed but explained that it was going to be a long road of recovery ahead. Both dogs stayed in overnight, Daisy required continual oxygen supplementation for 3 days in total, whereas Buddy was holding his own by the afternoon. My colleague Alex looked after Daisy & Buddy the first night they were admitted, then I took over. On Sunday I called one of our local specialist centres Anderson Moore's to make sure that we were doing everything we could for our very special Inpatients.

Buddy went home the next afternoon, whereas Daisy remained an inpatient for another few days. Her temperature become worryingly high, which we were concerned was due to her lungs becoming infected by secondary bacteria (pneumonia) so she was given antibiotics.

We've had a few check up visits since and were relieved that Buddy was back to his normal cheeky self in no time, Daisy took some time to recover & relished being hand fed for a few weeks! Her respiratory fitness was severely affected and they may well have problems in the future but they are both doing very well so far.



The whole team at Seadown are so thrilled that the Porter family have their dogs alive & well after what must have been an incredibly stressful time for them'.

Ruth finishes the story *'Buddy seems to almost back to his old self but Daisy still needs time. We can take her for short walks but she still continues to cough up black particles although she is a hundred times better than she was.*

Our lives have changed since the fire. We think because of the heavy rain that day there was an electrical surge which went through the Hoover plug starting the fire inside, despite it being turned off. We are now extra cautious and whenever we go out, we take every single plug out of the wall.

Looking back to that day and since, we can't thank Seadown enough. They were there in our emergency and did absolutely everything they could. Sophi dealt with us and was brilliant, she gave us no false hope, she was simply honest and she and the other staff treated Buddy and Daisy as if they were their own precious dogs. They really are fantastic vets and I cannot recommend them highly enough.

Below: Buddy and Daisy, following their final vet check with Seadown vet, Sophi Dolbear and with their family: Ruth and Robert Porter, and daughters, Chloe, 9 yrs and 4 year old, Faith



-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS

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SEADOWN VETERINARY SERVICES

Seadown Veterinary Services is independently owned by six partners, all of whom are practising vets. The practice provides first-class veterinary services in equine, farm and small animal veterinary medicine in the New Forest and surrounding area. Seadown is unique in having almost 100 years understanding and experience of treating animals in this beautiful national park and is proud to play an active role in all aspects of the forest community. It is a close, traditional practice that operates like a family with local vets, specialists, nurses and staff who are all passionate about the practice and their patients. Everyone works hard to marry traditional values of compassion and care with modern veterinary medicine and customer service, treating every patient as if it were their own. Seadown also has a highly respected eye referral service.