



StreetLife is a relatively new initiative, launched on the 1st September 2017, by Graeme and Linda Cree and a group of animal lovers who want to reduce the number of stray and abandoned dogs in the East Algarve (Faro, Loulé, Olhão, São Bras, Tavira, Moncarapacho, Fuzeta, Estoi and down to the Spanish border) through a programme of sterilisations.

There are several shelters across the Algarve and they are all overflowing with abandoned dogs, many of which come from local families.

Litters of puppies from unsterilised pets are a particular problem because many pet owners often prefer to dump them in waste bins or at shelters to get rid of the problem rather than sterilise.

A lot of families are on low income and if it is a case of feeding their children or sterilising their dogs then it's obvious what they are going to do. This is where StreetLife helps by subsidising the cost of sterilisations for the less well off.

Fund-raising groups and volunteers do a great job supporting the shelters, but StreetLife's aim is to try to reduce the number of litters in the first place, through a programme of sterilisation of both pets and stray dogs.

There are similar organisations elsewhere in Portugal, but StreetLife decided it wanted to focus on the East Algarve and on dogs, where little is being done.

StreetLife's Goals & Aspirations are to reduce the stray and abandoned dog population in the East Algarve through an Animal Sterilisation Programme. This approach has worked in other countries

(Graeme and Linda previously worked on a similar programme with a shelter in Goa, India) and it is proven to reduce the number of strays and unwanted litters.

StreetLife supports local pet owners who may not have the funds to pay for sterilisation, as well as local dog shelters who may need additional funding for sterilisations.

StreetLife liaises with the local municipal kennels and private shelters to see if they can improve the stray dog situation by working together.

StreetLife works with local vets to persuade them to support StreetLife programmes, hopefully with preferential rates!

StreetLife promotes the many benefits of sterilisation of pets.

Did you know? ONE unsterilised female dog and her mate, all of their litters, plus their offspring (if none are sterilised or die), adds up to 50,000 dogs in 7 years. That's a lot of potentially unwanted puppies and strays. ONE sterilisation could stop this!

What has StreetLife achieved in the last six months? StreetLife was launched in September 2017 with their "Zip for a Snip" fund raiser, with 28 enthusiastic "Zippers" and animal lovers zipping across the Guadiana River to help raise funds for StreetLife by getting sponsors. If that wasn't enough, another 45 supporters joined them all for lunch. Since then they haven't looked back. To begin with it was a slow, often frustrating process, talking to local pet owners, trying to convince them it was the right thing to do to sterilise their pets. Many do not understand why StreetLife would want to help fund the procedure.

StreetLife's first sterilisation took place on the 29th September 2017 - Nina. She had already had multiple litters and the owners thought she was in the early stages of pregnancy again. So they asked StreetLife for help with her sterilisation. Nina was sterilised and 12 unborn (& unwanted) puppies removed.

A good start to the StreetLife Animal Sterilisation Programme.

By the end of 2017, StreetLife had sterilised 9 dogs. By mid-March 2018, six months after their launch date, they had sterilised a further 25 dogs plus approval for funding had been given for another 12 dogs. A total of 46 dogs have either been sterilised to date or are in the pipeline. StreetLife is now receiving calls for help almost daily!

How does it all work? A pet owner makes contact with StreetLife and someone from StreetLife arranges a home visit to assess their situation, say "hello" to their dog(s) and see what StreetLife can do to help. A simple form is completed detailing information about the pet owner and their dog(s). The owner is always asked to make a contribution to the sterilisation based on their circumstances and then StreetLife pays the difference. For example: the sterilisation could cost €100, the pet owner contributes €20 and StreetLife pays the balance of €80. The vet is always paid directly by StreetLife; no money is given to the pet owner. Transport to / from the vet is also available if necessary.

How does StreetLife find dogs to sterilise? Posters have been put up in local shops and restaurants and many local vets who support StreetLife have posters on display. A good relationship



is now building up with vets and quite often a vet will make contact and say they have a potential candidate for the StreetLife programme. Facebook social media is also helping to spread the word. Many of the younger generation use Facebook, they find out about StreetLife and then they tell their parents or grandparents about the sterilisation programme. Also pet owners who have been helped are telling their friends, family and neighbours – the best marketing tool possible!

What's next? The StreetLife Animal Sterilisation Programme constantly wants to increase its visibility and to work with other animal welfare associations in educating pet owners to understand that sterilisation must be the way forward. StreetLife intends to set up a regular "clinic" in association with the local Juntas, where pet owners can come and discuss sterilisations. They also would like to get involved with local schools, talking to children about caring for their pets and why it is so important to sterilise.

It cannot be stressed enough that all the animal shelters are over populated—they are at saturation point and many of them cannot take a single extra dog. Puppies are being dumped like rubbish in bins—which is cruel and illegal! Dogs are also being abandoned on the streets, sometimes dogs that have been with their family for months / years—all because they have "outstayed their welcome". Hunters dump their dogs because they no longer have a useful purpose. More and more dogs are being stolen / lost and dogs which are not microchipped and registered often get abandoned

miles away from home and end up as strays. Recent changes in the law could mean pet owners will get fined if they do not look after their dogs properly but the reality of this is potentially low.

There is so much that needs to be done to improve the life of animals in Portugal . . . progress is slow and it will take a few more generations before acceptable results are seen.

Vets who currently work with the StreetLife Animal Sterilisation Programme include Vetcubo, Inemvet, Novavet, Tátápet, BVet, Centro Veterinário da Estação and we thank them for their support.

Who else supports StreetLife? StreetLife works with local animal welfare organisations and groups including ADAPO and with volunteers from local animal shelters. We also liaise with similar organisations who carry out sterilisation programmes in other areas of the Algarve such as SOS Algarve Animals (Central Algarve) and APAA (Association for Protection of Animals in the Algarve – Alvor, Portimão, Silves area). More and more local suppliers are also helping where they can by promoting StreetLife, helping with donations / sponsorships / raffle prizes at fund raising events: Antonio's Restaurante, Monterosa Olive Oil, Vila Monte Farm House, Escola do Turismo (Catering College) Faro, Caravela Restaurante, Pontos dos Amigos Restaurante and the Marina Hotel Olhão. Musicians like Vernon Delauney and Richard Bassett have donated their time for free at fund-raising events. Also afpop (Association for Foreign Residents & Visitors to Portugal www.afpop.com) EA members are very strong supporters of the StreetLife programme, Linda Cree

being the event organiser and main fund raiser.

The list is growing daily. If you would like to support StreetLife please make contact.

Donations: StreetLife can only exist through donations to fund the sterilisations, they do not have a money tree, they do not have a magic wand . . . they rely on the generosity and support of others. People like YOU! Every donation will help to make a difference to the life of a local dog and to the strays in our local neighborhood.

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR THERE ARE REGULAR EVENTS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR STREETLIFE.

Monthly StreetLife QuizWhiz Evenings – usually the second Saturday in the month at Pontos dos Amigos Restaurante. These evenings are organized by Brian & Christine Beckwith, two very dedicated StreetLife Volunteers. These events are becoming increasingly popular with 60+ QuizWhizzers attending each month. It is all light-hearted fun and very good value at around €10.00, which includes music, quiz, supper and 2 litres of house wine per table / team (maximum 6 per team). There is a league table and at the end of the year there will be a trophy awarded to the winning team at the StreetLife QuizWhiz Awards Night in September! To find out more email: quizwhiz@streetlife.pt.

July 27th: Full Moon Summer Ball organised by afpop EA and all profits to StreetLife. For the past three years afpop EA has organised a Full Moon Summer Ball, a fund-raising event for local animal charities, with 120+ guests attending. The lovely students at the