

Sam's rescue by the RNLI

In April 2004, when we first moved to Somerset from Birmingham, we were out taking our dogs Sam and Lola for a walk along the cliff tops at Lilstock, just along the coast from Dunster when a gas gun (used by farmers for scaring birds away from crops) went off, unfortunately it frightened our dog Sam who jumped off the cliff in fear and fell 60ft onto the beach below.

You can imagine what went through our minds but amazingly when we got to Sam he was still alive, injured but still alive. When we first saw him, he was lying on his side, but when we called his name he lifted his ear but couldn't move, when we tried to lift him he yelped, we knew he was hurt but not to what extent. Our bad day hadn't ended though, this was a day which had one of the highest tides of the year and by rescuing our dog, we had got ourselves cut off by the tide.

A call to the emergency services was made and via a conversation with HM Coastguard we were rescued by the RNLI lifeboat "Staines Whitfield" on its maiden trip out and on a training exercise in the Watchet area.

The crew got the lifeboat as close to us as possible as we waded out to sea with Sam in Brett's arms and Lola swimming and got aboard the lifeboat. Wet and somewhat embarrassed we were dropped off further along the coast onto Lilstock Beach to be met by the Coastguard and a Vet from White lodge Veterinary Practice.

Sam was taken to the Vets in Minehead for a few days, he was badly bruised but amazingly healthy, he lived to a ripe old age but sadly died in 2012, we had a wet journey back home in the car and as for Lola, she had her first swim in the sea, amazingly she continued to love the beach all her life. Had it not been for the Burnham-on-Sea lifeboat crew who rescued us that day, this story could have been so different.

Even though we, like most people supported the RNLI and the work they do, now we feel we owe them a debt and always donate and buy from them as our way of saying thanks.

