

Devastation greeted Animal Angel pet sitters as they returned from a short trip to the local railway station – trees down, debris everywhere and a landscape that was quite different from the one they left.

Mike and Sandra, two of our very experienced pet sitters, were recently house and pet sitting for clients in a small village near Halstead in Essex, when a 20m diameter tornado hit during a freak hailstorm.

They didn't know what to expect as they ventured up the driveway and into the house. Much to their relief, Annie, Rosie, Polly and Lizzy, the four Springer Spaniels they were pet sitting for, were unhurt and relaxing on the settees, just as they had left them. As they greeted them with wagging tails and tongues hanging out, Sandra and Mike were horrified to see the summer house pinned up against the conservatory roof, fallen trees strewn across the garden and a chaotic scene across a once beautifully landscaped garden. Fortunately not a pane of glass broken, just a few roof tiles thrown around or more importantly no one was hurt.

Local family members and neighbours pulled together to clear the garden and after a huge bonfire and several skip loads later, some normality had returned in preparation for the client's arrival back home.

Despite everything else going on around them, Mike and Sandra's key responsibility was for the four dogs and through everything the Springers remained happy, healthy and had come to no harm.

Mike and Sandra have lived out in Australia and have had experience of cyclones, so this was not a scene that they were unfamiliar with, but was not something they necessarily expected while pet sitting for Animal Angels in rural Essex. They both approached this unusual event with a calm professionalism and the client was extremely happy and relieved that the whole situation had been dealt with by their family, friends and Mike and Sandra.