

Pet Rehoming Statistics Have Doubled

What to do if you can no longer afford your pet

14th February 2023

Finance champion Jasmine Birtles is here to offer some suggestions to people who can no longer afford their pets.

This advice comes as an animal Welfare charity has this week said to have received 4000 calls from people wanting to give up their pet. That is double what it received last year. Shelters have reportedly been receiving more and more unwanted animals as the cost of living crisis affects millions across the UK. The SPCA have specified that the cost of living crisis is nearly solely to blame for this crisis in animal rehoming.

As fuel and bill prices rise along with grocery costs, many people just can't justify spending money on an animal as well.

Jo Evans, who manages a shelter for the RSPCA near Exeter, told the [BBC](#) that people are struggling to pay for vet bills: "We are beginning to see people say they just can't afford to own an animal so they have to rehome it," said Evans, before noting that people should take the time to understand the cost involved before they take on a new pet.

According to [Pet Keen](#), an estimated 2.7 million animals a year in the UK are being taken in by shelters: mostly dogs and cats but also fish and small mammals, which is financially stretching the shelters. And with the cost of living crisis, the problems are piling up.

Jasmine Birtles of consumer website MoneyMagpie.com has stepped in to offer some solutions on what people can potentially do, when they realise that they can't afford their pet.

What to do...

There are several ways you could consider getting a helping hand raising some money to help you keep your pet, and many supporters out there who'd be keen to get involved.

CHARITIES

While it's the responsibility of pet owners to ensure they can afford any veterinary treatment their pets may require, sometimes people fall on hard times, and vet fees, especially for unplanned emergencies, can be a real concern.

Here are some charities who may be able to help with the cost of veterinary treatment:

1. PDSA

To qualify for free or subsidised treatment, pet owners must be in receipt of certain benefits, such as housing benefit or council tax support, and live within the catchment area of a PDSA hospital or clinic.

2. RSPCA

The RSPCA has clinics and practices across England which offer reduced cost veterinary assistance to pet owners who meet their criteria.

3. BLUE CROSS

Blue Cross operates in England and Wales, providing means-tested support to low-income families who live in the catchment area of its hospitals or clinics.

4. DOGS TRUST

Dogs Trust provides free and subsidised treatments to pet owners who are homeless or in a housing crisis. The scheme runs in 112 towns and cities across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

5. CATS PROTECTION

Cats Protection offers financial assistance to cash-strapped owners wishing to spay or neuter their cat. Unfortunately, they don't offer further assistance with veterinary procedures or bills.

6. LOCAL CHARITIES AND ORGANISATIONS

There are also several independent charities which offer help with veterinary expenses. Speak to your daytime vet to find out about those local to you.

CROWDFUNDING

You could also consider starting a CROWDFUNDER CAMPAIGN, as there are potentially thousands of people out there who may be sympathetic to your plight, particularly when it comes to our animal friends.

We speak to Jenny Orgram (not real name) in Scarborough who recently had to run a campaign to put her dog through a very expensive cancer treatment. She said "whilst humiliating at first, it was actually a friend who suggested the campaign" and that as a single parent (not by choice) she "simply couldn't afford a bill of nearly 12 thousand pounds" and the "choice to euthanise Bella absolutely wasn't an option" She said that "if it wasn't for running that campaign she would now be without her best friend and that Bella got the all clear near Christmas last year". She hopes by sharing this story she will help others find the confidence to run such campaigns themselves.

RSPCA ADVICE

If you really do have to consider giving up your pet, the RSPCA website has some advice for people who are considering giving up their pet. They say that before giving up pets because of expensive vet bills, do some research. Some of the

RSPCA'S branches may be able to help if you're receiving low-income state benefits. Find out if you could be eligible for financial assistance. Other charities can also help. You could also consider pet insurance, which covers future unexpected vets' bills. We recommend pet insurance as an essential part of responsible pet ownership.

Sometimes giving up a pet is the right thing to do, but it can be distressing for you and them, so it needs to be done carefully. Give your pet the best chance of finding a happy home:

Contact the original seller to see if they would be willing to take your pet back. Contact a charity or rescue centre experienced in matching each pet with the right owner.

Many RSPCA branches prioritise animals in need, so may not be able to rehome your pet. However, your local branch may be able to help, depending on the services they offer, so find your local branch.

If your local RSPCA branch can't help, other charities are often able to. There are many organisations that can help you rehome your dog or cat. They all have different procedures, so research carefully before giving them a pet you're no longer able to care for.

GIVING UP A DOG YOU'RE NO LONGER ABLE TO CARE FOR

Below are some charities that may help you rehome your dog, jasmine however reminds us to be very careful to find shelters with a "no kill" policy:

www.battersea.org.uk

www.adch.org.uk

www.bluecross.org.uk

<https://www.hoperescue.org.uk>

GIVING UP A CAT YOU'RE NO LONGER ABLE TO CARE FOR

Below are some charities that may help you rehome your cat:

www.cats.org.uk

www.bluecross.org.uk

www.adch.org.uk

ONE LAST PIECE OF ADVICE FROM JASMINE

"If you are reading this and already in the financial position described, then please seek advise and be very very careful to rehome responsibly, if you are interested in shelters, be sure to check their kill policies. Avoid ever rehoming an animal without checking out the home with a professional.

If however you are yet to own an animal please take into account that our situations can change. Never go into pet ownership on a whim and always read up on the responsibilities it entails. Ask a few people who already have pets what their own experiences were and try and seek a pet which suits your budget."

- ENDS -

If you would like to interview Jasmine on the key themes discussed - please contact vicky.parry@moneymagpie.com.

MoneyMagpie is the UK's leading self-help money site for those seeking a richer life. It's packed with fun and easy to understand articles, eBooks and videos on how to make money, save money and manage your money wisely.

Essentially, MoneyMagpie is your complete guide to your money including how to save it, how to spend it, how to make it and how to invest it.

Founded in 2007 by money-making expert, journalist and TV personality Jasmine Birtles, well-known for her appearances on popular day-time TV & radio shows and through her columns as a print journalist, such as her weekly Miss Moneysaver column in the Daily Mail.

MoneyMagpie has become a major and trusted online destination with over 2,500 money articles across a broad range of financial topics from how to make money, save money and manage your money wisely.

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