



About us



“He is the only family I’ve got. I would rather stay homeless than lose him.”

Homeless pet owner, Newcastle



A message from our Founder and CEO

This year marks a decade of Street Paws: ten years since we first stepped onto the streets of Newcastle with a simple idea and a fierce belief that no one experiencing homelessness should have to choose between a safe place to stay and the pet they love.

What began as a small volunteer-led effort is now a national charity influencing policy and driving real change across the homelessness and animal welfare sectors. We have supported thousands of people and their companion animals, developed the Pet Champion Scheme and helped accommodation providers become pet-inclusive. This year we also celebrated the Keeping Pets and People Together Charter, a landmark piece of work already shaping national conversations.

None of this would have been possible without our dedicated team, volunteers and partners, and the people we support, whose resilience and trust inspire us every day. I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved together. As we look ahead to the next decade, we will keep advocating, innovating and collaborating until every person experiencing homelessness with a pet can access safety, dignity and support.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Here's to the next ten years, and to the lives we will change together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Southern'.

Michelle Southern OBE



Our Vision

A future where homelessness never separates people and their pets.

Our Purpose

Standing up for people and pets facing homelessness.

What we stand for

Street Paws stands up for people facing homelessness, because, for them, a pet is a lifeline, not a luxury. We challenge the misconception that having a pet should ever be a barrier to a secure home. That's why, in partnership with local authorities, hostels, and support services, we provide accessible veterinary care, training, and advocacy - breaking down barriers and opening doors to make pet-friendly support the norm, not the exception.



What do we do

- Partner with hostels - providing everything they need to become pet friendly, **removing the barriers** for pet owners to access safe accommodation.
- Monthly **outreach** walks- signposting and vet care organised for pet owners experiencing street homelessness
- **Campaign** locally and Nationally to make pet friendly temporary accommodation the norm not the exception
- **Collaborate** with like minded organisations, local authorities and businesses to platform the importance of pets for people experiencing homelessness.



"He is the only family I've got. I would rather stay homeless than lose him."

For too many people, that's the choice they face.

A hostel bed is offered, but their dog isn't welcome, so they stay on the street. Their pet is the one constant in a life that has fallen apart: the reason they get up in the morning, and the one who keeps them safe at night. The opportunity to escape homelessness is lost.

The Pet Champion Scheme exists so that nobody has to make that choice.

This year, **41** hostels opened their doors to people and their pets, **19** of them for the first time. Each one means a person who can come in from the cold without leaving behind the companion who got them through it.



When someone arrives at a Pet Champion hostel, their pet is welcomed too

They receive a welcome pack with a calming spray to help their pet settle, toys and treats, and a guide to help them through the first weeks. It's a small gesture, but it says something many people haven't heard in a long time: you and your pet belong here.

Behind the scenes, we make saying yes easy for hostels.

Staff get a handbook, practical advice and someone to call. Residents' pets get vet care when they need it as well as access to support, signposting and advocacy.

199 vet referrals this year, from vaccinations to treating skin conditions, caught early before they become emergencies.



The difference is felt by the people who run these services every day:

"Without them we would not be able to house and support homeless people and their dogs. No person should ever rough sleep, and many dog owners will choose to rough sleep rather than leave their pets."

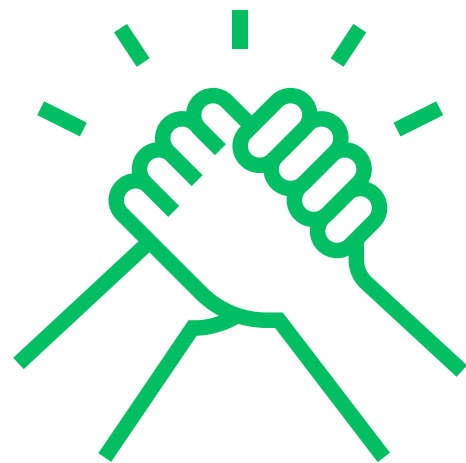
— Support Manager, Manchester

"They always put the needs of the pet first... They are a brilliant partner to have in our schemes and help us to achieve our goals of ending rough sleeping and creating homes for people."

— Beacon Pathways Manager

Every Pet Champion hostel is one more place where love and loyalty are no longer a reason to be left outside.

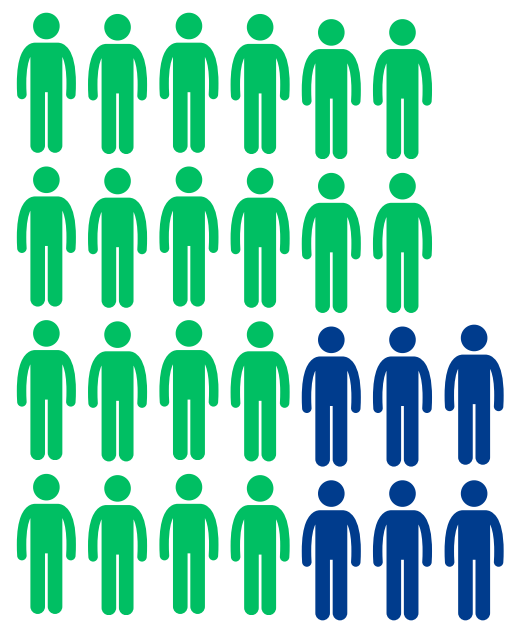
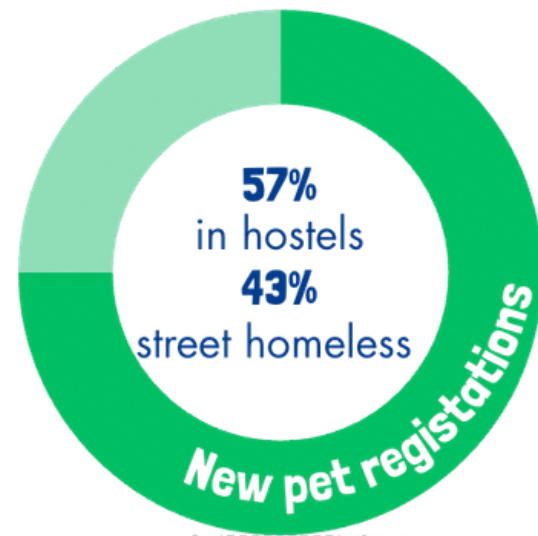
888
REQUESTS
FOR SUPPORT



199 VET REFERRALS
MADE



83% vet costs spent
on treatment



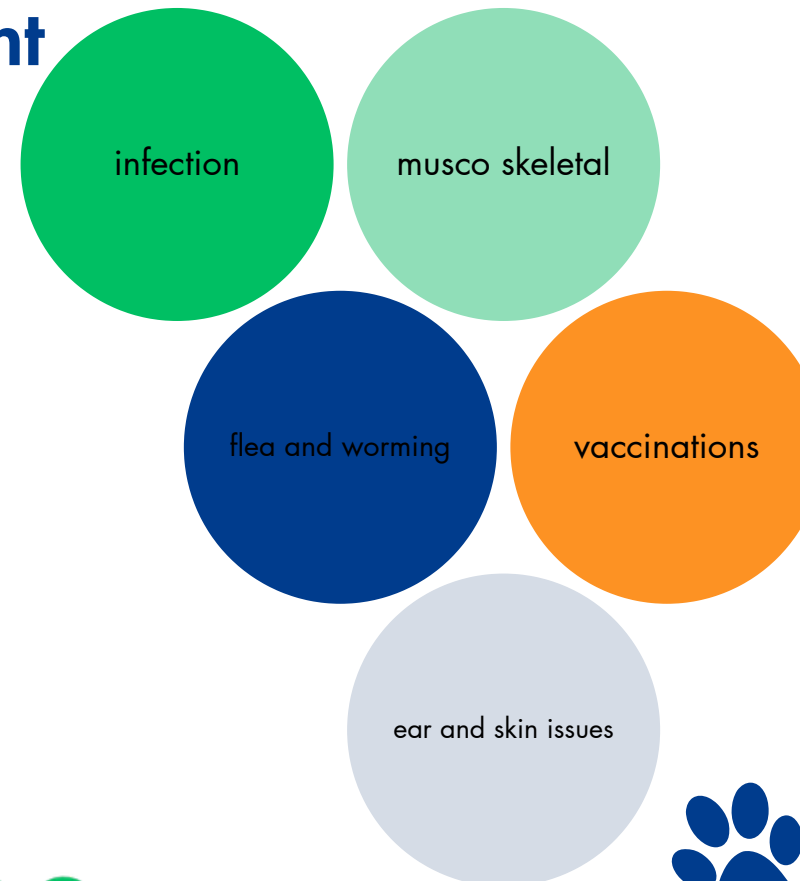
54 VOLUNTEER
VISITS

26

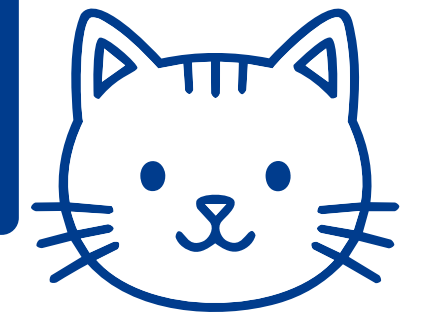
VOLUNTEERS



120 hours of
volunteers time
donated



vaccinations



159
dogs

34 cats

1 rat



8,246 people signed
the petition





Help when it's needed

When someone is facing homelessness with a pet, every day matters. That's why we've made it as easy as possible to reach us, whoever and wherever you are.

- **Clear information online.** Our website signposts pet owners, and the people supporting them, to the help available, so they can find answers quickly, even outside office hours.
- **Self-referral.** Pet owners can refer themselves directly. There's no need to wait for a professional to do it for them, and no wrong door.
- **Every call answered with care.** We respond to every request for support within 24 hours. Each one is logged, assessed and followed up, so people get the right support as soon as they need it, with urgent cases such as a pet who needs a vet or someone at risk of losing a bed prioritised.

Whether someone finds us online, refers themselves or is referred by a support worker, they get the same thing: a quick, compassionate response and a clear next step.



Why pets matter: a lifeline, not a luxury

For someone experiencing homelessness, a pet can be the one constant when everything else is lost.

People describe their pets as family. Pets help them manage their mental health, keep a routine, look after themselves and work towards a home.

Pets help. Research links pet ownership to better heart health and fitness, less anxiety and stress, greater resilience, and a stronger sense of purpose. People describe their pets as family, and as the reason they keep a routine, look after themselves and work towards a home.

"My dog's keeping me alive. I wake up in the morning cause I've got my dog... so I've got to sort myself out."

Yet a pet too often stands between a person and a safe bed:

84% of professionals knew of people who turned down accommodation to keep their dog

70% said having a dog was a barrier to accessing services

89% of dog-friendly services saw a positive impact on their clients

(IMPACT, 2026)

For some of the most vulnerable people, a pet is also the way in. They'll accept help for their animal when they won't for themselves.

Keeping pets and people together keeps people well, keeps them engaged and helps them move forward.

Archer's Story

At 19 years old, Archer has lived a long and happy life by his owner's side. Rescued 16 years ago, the two have shared every single day together—from playful walks to quiet moments of companionship. Recently, they faced a heart-breaking separation when Archer's owner was offered temporary accommodation but wasn't told he could bring Archer too. Thanks to our volunteer coordinator stepping in, we were able to provide immediate, crucial support to find them a place where they could stay together.

But their story didn't end there. Once Archer and his owner were safely settled in temporary housing, our work shifted. We believe in giving owners the tools and connections they need to achieve independence, rather than just providing temporary relief. Our team was able to offer support with proof of responsible ownership, a Pet CV and letters of support for potential landlords.

When we caught up with them, it was with pride that Archer's owner shared that they finally had a home of their own, together. Stories like Archer's remind us why it's so important that no one should have to choose between a roof over their head and the pet they love. For so many, especially in vulnerable and stressful situations, like being homeless, their pet is their sole source of comfort, love, and motivation to keep going.





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homelessness
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