

The UK Pet Industry Report Vol.3

The Slow Return to a New 'Normal'

May 2022





Welcome!



The past two years have brought unprecedented uncertainty and unusual market trends due to the global health pandemic. Our previous industry reports, published during the pandemic, showed that pet ownership increased steeply, and supply struggled to meet demand, pushing prices up dramatically. With the lockdown era behind us, we see a return to pre-pandemic demand for pets and, therefore, a decrease in prices, although still not to pre-pandemic levels.

As predicted, the demand for pets continued to decrease in the first part of 2022; there is no expectation of demand growth this year due to the considerable spike during 2020 and 2021. As an example of the return to normalcy, the number of buyers per puppy/dog advertised on Pets4Homes in April 2022 was 168, whereas at the beginning of the pandemic, this figure was above 300.

Dogs are still coming out on top, with 63% of all buyers searching for a dog or puppy. The Golden Retriever has become the most sought-after dog per puppy, with 717 buyers for each advertised puppy. For the top 5 cats, the list is similar to last year. However, the Devon Rex has overtaken the Siberian as the most sought-after cat, with 416 buyers per cat/kitten advertised.

As can be expected, prices have also started to come down from record levels, given that the market trends have reversed. The average dog/puppy price before covid was £876, during March 2021 it was £2,237, and £1,329 in April 2022. Cat buyers are seeing similar decreases in price across the top 20 most popular breeds and can expect to pay around 20% less than in 2021.

With lockdowns behind us, pet wellbeing looms and whether our return to normal life has affected them negatively. We are pleased to say that the answer is a resounding no. Only 2% of owners report concern for their pets' wellbeing post-lockdown, and 7% cite separation anxiety.

A widespread notion regarding the surge in pet ownership during Covid-19 is that people now are abandoning their "pandemic puppies" by reselling them or giving them up for adoption. However, thus far, our data is showing that the surge of advertisements on Pets4Homes can be traced back to new litters - not reselling.

Our insights show that there are still gaps in buyer knowledge and that buyer vigilance needs to improve. There was also a slight increase in impulse buyers who spend less than a week researching the breed they desire, from 7% in 2021 to 10% in 2022. We urge all buyers to be responsible and do their research before rehoming a pet. We will continue to educate our users and partner with animal welfare organisations. We will also continue to implement tech features that contribute to a safer space for pets and pet parents.



Lee Gibson
UK Managing Director at
Pets4Homes





Making the pet industry a safer place for pets and pet parents is a team effort

We are proud to work closely with several great organisations that make pet space safer for pets and pet parents. Sharing insights and data to educate the public and our users through our industry report is one of many tools helping us continuously improve welfare standards for all pets. Read more about our new Trust & Safety measures in [section 5](#).



“Pets4Homes provides invaluable data on pet sales and the impact of Covid and the cost of living crisis on prices and market trends. This report has clear synergies with the survey results that RSPCA and the Association of Cat and Dog Homes have reported in the past year. For instance, the 7% survey snapshot of owners whose dog or cat is experiencing separation anxiety ...” read the full quote on [slide 5](#)



“...Aside from legislation, it is vital we share information and help the high welfare businesses grow and meet the demand for pets and educate the public on how to avoid being petfished.” read the full quote on [slide 16](#)



“At Woodgreen, we too are seeing the tables turn. Rehoming applications are down while the number of pets coming through our doors is increasing – both from owners who can no longer care for them and strays in need of urgent care. More and more pet owners are also turning to us for help with their pets ...” read the full quote on [slide 50](#)





Market trends are reverting to normal, wherein the gap between the number of available pets and the demand is shrinking - ultimately driving prices down from the previous peak.

As the data from the last two years have shown, there was initially a massive spike in demand for pets and a shortfall in demand during the early lockdown. Supply increased throughout 2021 and has remained relatively high in 2022 due to breeders reacting to the pandemic surge. However, we are still seeing discrepancies between supply and demand at more sustainable levels than at the peak of the pandemic. If we examine the case of dogs, we see that up until April 2022. There were around 60k dogs available for sale on Pets4Homes, which is in line with last year's figures. However, the overall demand has fallen compared to the same period in 2021, and this trend is expected to continue. We expect prices to fall further as the gap closes between supply and demand.



Lee Gibson
UK Managing Director at
Pets4Homes

“For years, the UK has suffered from a chronic undersupply of puppies and kittens that has failed to meet the demand for pets, in particular during the height of the pandemic. Inevitably, this discrepancy has enticed unscrupulous sellers and those involved in the low welfare and illegal puppy trade to profit from people's desire for a furry companion. We are glad that we are finally seeing these trends reverse with a rise in breeding by UK hobby breeders while demand is normalising.”



David Bowles
Head of Public Affairs - RSPCA

"Pets4Homes provides invaluable data into pet sales and the impact of Covid and the cost of living crisis on prices and market trends. There are clear synergies in this report to the survey results that RSPCA and the Association of Cat and Dog Homes have reported in the past year. For instance the 7% survey snapshot of owners whose dog or cat is experiencing separation anxiety has been replicated in survey of 80 UK cat and dog rescues, with 70% of them reporting a huge rise in dogs and cats entering rescues with behavioural issues creating a range of operational challenges. The reasons may lie with a previous Pets4Homes survey which showed people getting dogs under lockdown tended to be inexperienced first time owners."

There is no one size fits all species and the RSPCA has also seen large differences between animals being abandoned and coming into our care. At one extreme, like the survey, we have seen little rise in the number of horses being abandoned compared to a near doubling of rabbits entering our care since last year and the start of an increase in dogs entering our care in 2022. This may be the prelude to dogs being abandoned as people return to the office and go on holiday and as people realise the massive commitment of owning an animal and the impact of the sudden cost of living rises we are witnessing. More than ever the sector needs to work together on sustainable solutions to all these problems."



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Section 1

**Demand is
normalising above
pre-pandemic levels**





Slow return to normal - with demand stabilising at more sustainable levels

2022 has seen a return to a more normal way of life after the pandemic years, and with it has come a reverse in demand for pets to pre-pandemic levels. Compared with last year's same period, we have seen a 42% decrease in demand in early 2022. As of April 2022, 3.5m households in the UK searched for a pet on Pets4Homes, whereas the same period last year saw 4.4m pet lovers searching for a new companion.

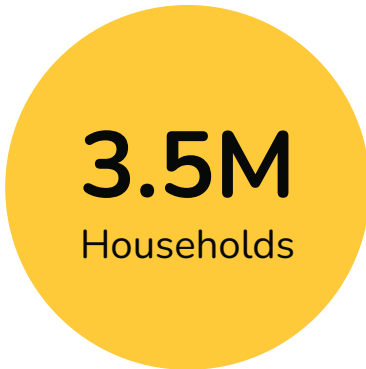
The competition for a pet was fierce during 2020 when we saw 420 potential buyers for each pet advertised on Pets4Homes. As supply caught up with demand, this figure stabilised in 2021 to a more sustainable level of 50 potential buyers per pet. The demand so far in 2022 shows us that it is stabilising, and there is no expectation for it to grow. Instead, it is returning to levels seen in 2019.



Demand is down by 42% between Jan-April 2022, vs. same period last year



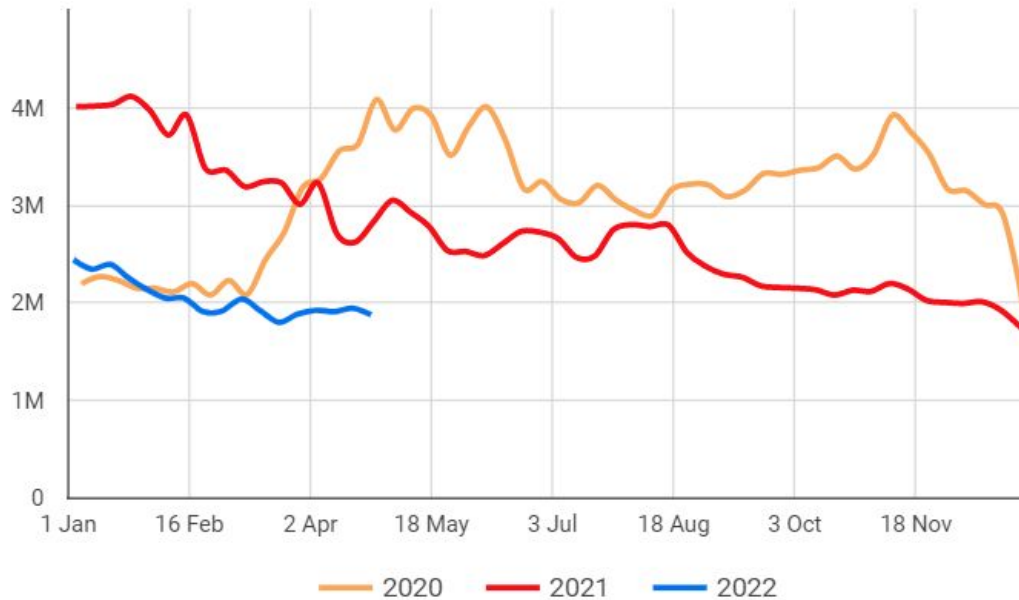
In April 2022, there were 168 buyers competing for every puppy/dog for sale, compared to above 300 buyers for every puppy/dog in May 2020



3.5m pet lovers searched for a new companion in April 2022

Number of visitors and buyers are stabilising above pre-pandemic levels

Weekly Number of Visitors



Buyers per Advertised Pet



We saw a surge in demand for pets during the pandemic, with the number of weekly visits doubling to 4 million per week. In 2021 we saw demand gradually decreasing, a trend which has continued during 2022. Demand has now reverted to pre-pandemic levels. Given the number of people who rehomed a pet during the pandemic (some who may have thought about the decision for years), we do not expect any growth in demand during 2022.

The number of buyers per pet advertised also shows a return to normal levels of 50 buyers per pet advertised, compared to the early days of the pandemic, which saw 420 potential buyers competing for each pet advertised on Pets4Homes.





Mike Flynn
Scottish SPCA chief superintendent

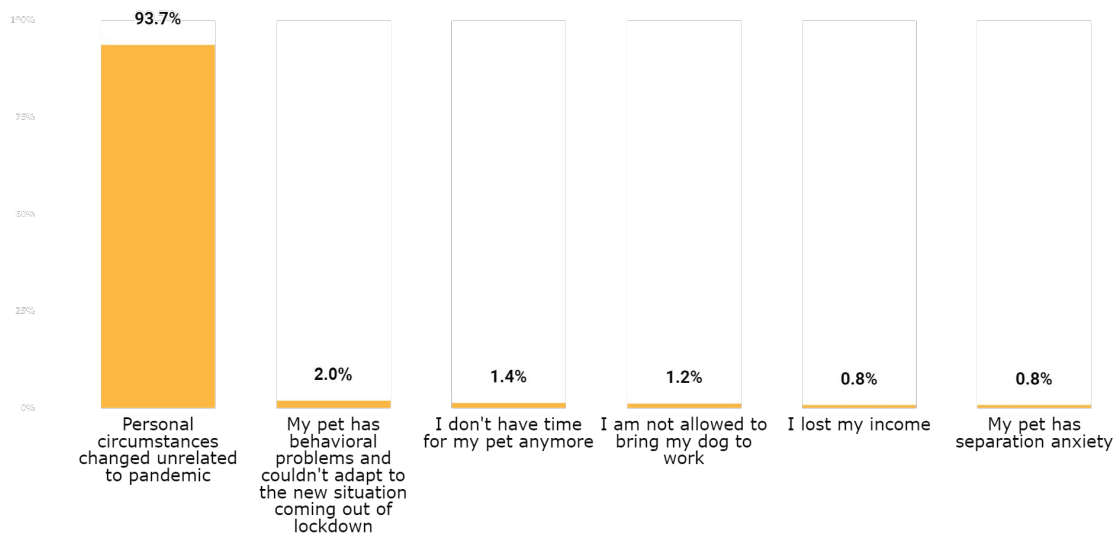
“The demand for pets, particularly puppies and kittens, and the lack of enforcement on the buying and selling of animals, causes animals to suffer in the name of profit. That’s why one of the focusses of our ambitious 10-year strategy, For All Animals, is to eliminate the low-welfare puppy and kitten trade in Scotland.”

We spearhead Operation Delphin, a multi-agency task force set up to tackle the low-welfare industry, and having support and data from Pets4Homes is invaluable in this fight. Pets4Homes’ efforts to educate the public on this despicable trade, as well as other animal welfare concerns, are key to helping us make Scotland better for all animals and we look forward to continuing to work together in the future.”

Has the end of lockdown restrictions impacted the wellbeing of dogs?

We asked more than 4,000 users on Pets4Homes to what extent the care for their pet has been impacted by the lockdown restrictions being lifted, and how concerned they are for their pet if they are returning to a more normal life.

Why are you rehoming your pet?



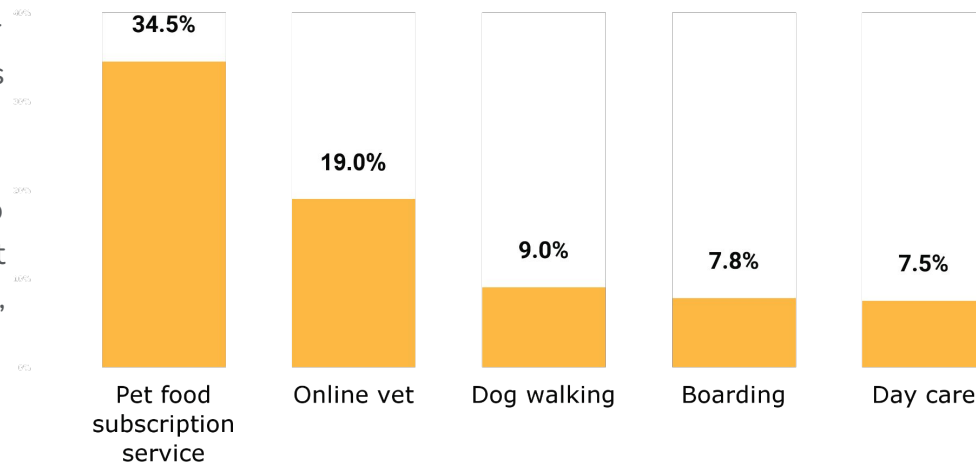
We asked those selling a dog, rather than a puppy, on Pets4Homes for their motivations for doing so, and the vast majority (94%) cited reasons unrelated to coming out of lockdown.

We also asked new pet owners to what extent they are using services to help them care for their pets, and a majority of new pet owners use at least one service such as: pet food subscription, dog walking, boarding, or daycare.

Source: Survey conducted on Pets4Homes. Respondents: 4,170



Have you used any of the following services in the last 12 months?



Section 2

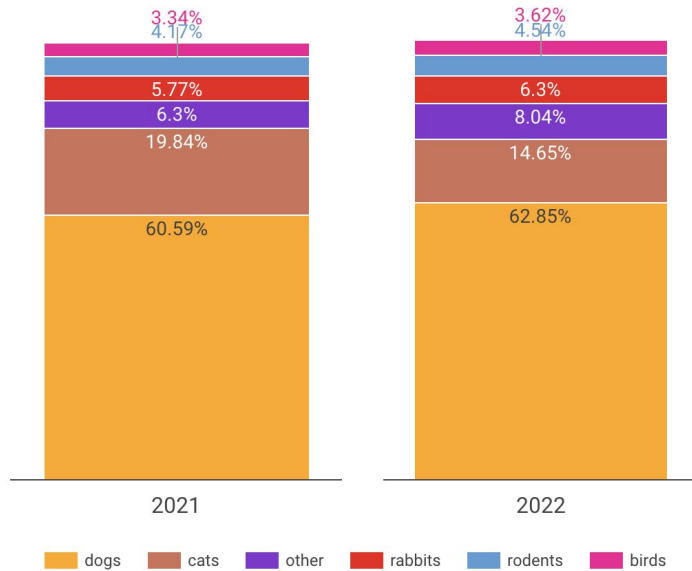
Breakdown of demand by pet type and breed



Dogs increase lead as “Man's Best Friend”

Dogs remain the most popular pet of 2022, attracting 63% of all pet buyers. Cats come in second place at 15%, following a decline from 20% in the previous year.

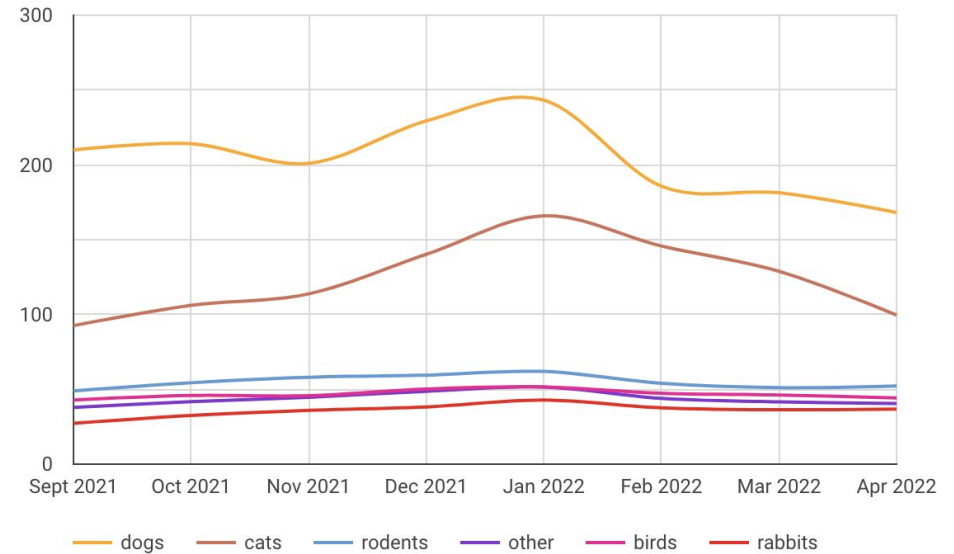
Share of pet buyers per pet type



Pets4Homes reports that the share of people looking for different pets has remained relatively stable from last year to 2022. Out of those looking for a pet companion, 63% were looking for dogs and puppies.

The largest difference is the significant drop in the share of people interested in rehoming a cat, which lost 5pp vs. the previous year.

Buyers per advertised pet type



While demand has dropped significantly, we are still seeing the same imbalance as previous years in supply vs. demand as a consequence of the decline in pets available for sale. The imbalance is still the greatest for dogs that attracted 168 potential buyers per dog in April vs. 100 buyers per cat and c.52 buyers per advertised pet for rodents, birds and rabbits.



Border Terrier climbs 21 places to claim 3rd spot

The [Golden Retriever](#) claimed the top spot as the breed with the most buyers per dog/puppy advertised with >700 buyers per dog, climbing six places vs. last year. The [Border Terrier](#), a great companion for people who lead active lives, climbed 15 places since last year and currently attracts 659 buyers per dog advertised.

Number of buyers per Border Terrier Dog/Puppy

590

April 2021

659

April 2022



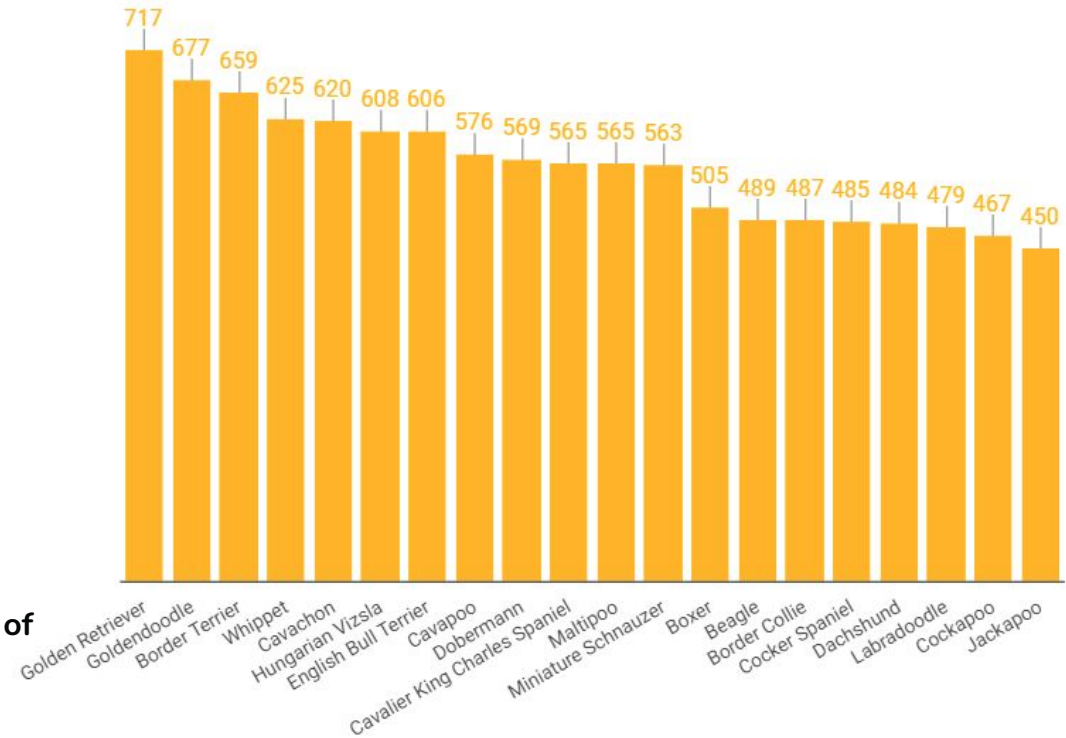
Which breeds attract the lowest amount of buyers per dog/puppy?

The Brachycephalic, or flat-faced, dog breeds of [French Bulldogs](#), [Pugs](#), and American Bully attract the least amount of buyers per advertised dog/puppy at “only” 154, 177, and 181 buyers per dog/puppy, respectively.

Buyers per Dog/Puppy Advertised, 2022

Rank vs. 1 year ago

+3 -1 +15 +8 +7 -1 +2 -3 -7 -3 -5 -4 -2 +5 +5 +1 -3 -3 -5 +11



Number of buyers per dog/puppy advertised, excluding rare breeds with less than 250 listings advertised.



Devon Rex takes #1 spot

The distinctive-looking [Devon Rex](#) climbs from #2 last year to take the #1 spot attracting 469 buyers per cat advertised (even though buyers were down from 669 per [Devon Rex](#) cat last year). The outgoing [Munchkin](#) that thrives on human company was the cat climbing the most places in 2022, attracting 342 buyers per cat advertised.

Number of buyers per each Devon Rex cat/kitten

669

April 2021

468

April 2022

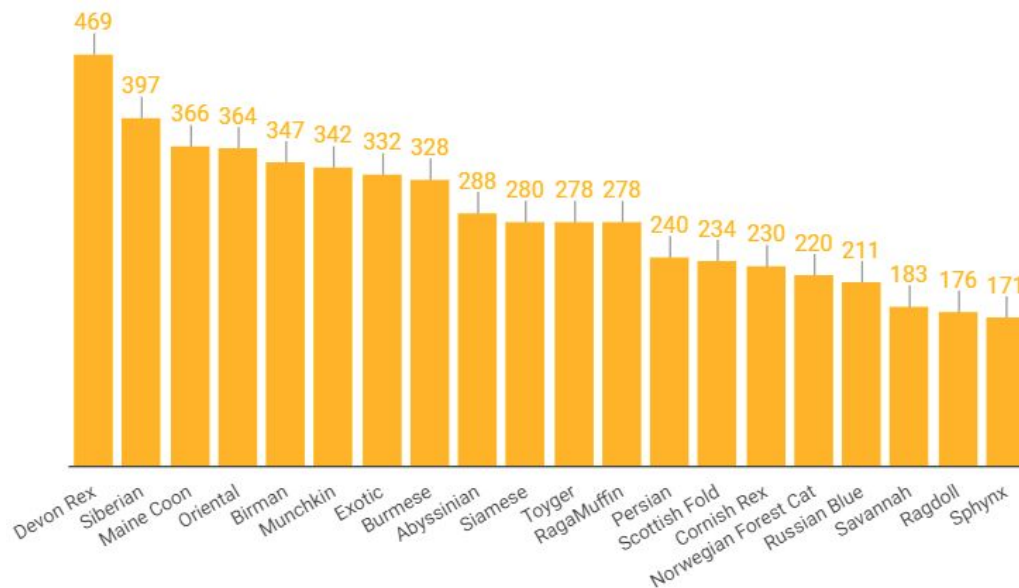


The cat breeds that receive the least amount of attention from buyers per listed cat include the [Asian Cat](#) (114) and the [Brazilian Shorthair](#) (99)

Buyers Per Cat/Kitten Advert, 2022

Rank vs. 1
year ago

+1 +1 +4 +1 +4 +11 +5 +3 -1 +6 +10 +5 +6 +8 -14 -11 -4 -8 +10 0





Marisa Heath
Co-ordinator, CFSG

"Over the past five years, we have seen the introduction of several legislative measures to improve animal welfare. This legislation includes the new licensing regime for pet businesses, the ban on third-party puppy and kitten sales, and the restrictions coming on imports and mutilated dogs. There has been a real focus on curbing the illegal imports of puppies in particular, and there is more thinking to go around how we make sure people get healthy, happy pets and support high welfare breeders and sellers. Aside from legislation, it is vital we share information and help the high welfare businesses grow and meet the demand for pets and educate the public on how to avoid being petfished."

Section 3

Pet types and breeds available for rehoming

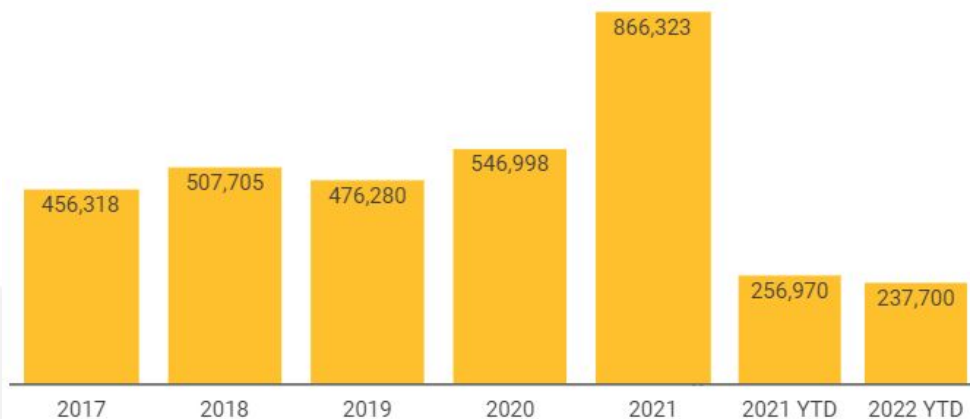
Large increase in available dogs/puppies for sale

Advertised Dogs/Puppies For Sale, Weekly



As illustrated to the left, 2021 was characterised by a significantly higher number of pets for sale than the previous year due to puppy breeders responding to the increased demand following the Covid-19 surge. After the annual temporary decrease of advertisements over Christmas, advertised dogs for sale so far in 2022 have remained at the high levels seen in 2021. In April 2022 alone, more than 60k dogs and puppies were advertised for sale.

Advertised Dogs/Puppies For Sale - Last 5 Years



238k
Dogs/Puppies rehomed up until April 2022

French Bulldog remains the most common dog breed in the UK representing 11% of all dogs sold

The top 5 most common breeds in the UK remain the same as last year. [The Cockapoo](#) remains the #3 most common breed despite losing 1pp share from 6% to 5% in 2022.

The biggest mover this year is the [Miniature Dachshund](#), that has gained 9 places to be the #9 most common breed to be rehomed in 2022. The [Staffordshire Bull Terrier](#) also reported a 1pp gain in share from 2% to 3% gaining 5 places with c.5k dogs rehomed year to date in 2022.

Advertised Dogs/Puppies For Sale by Breed, Jan-April 2022

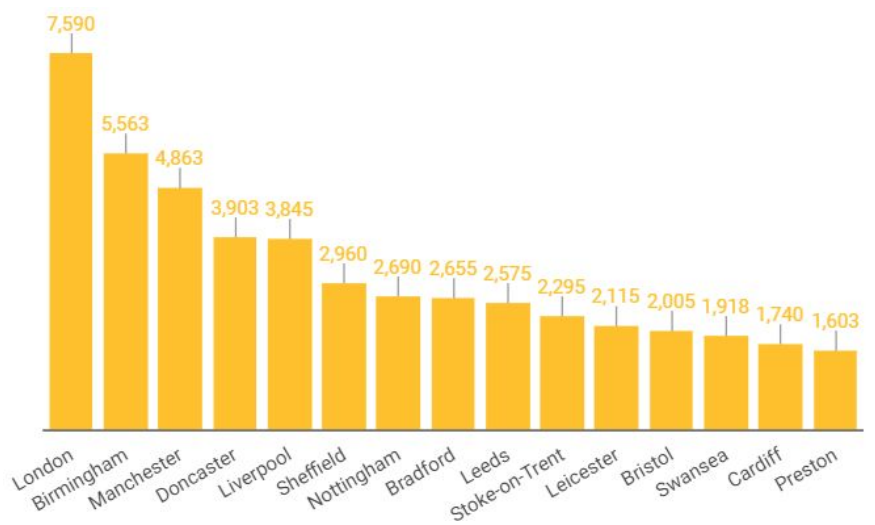
Breed	Rank	# dogs	% dogs change	% share	% share prev year	rank vs last year
French Bulldog	1	18,818	13%	11%	9.57%	0
American Bully	2	9,125	N/A	6%	N/A	N/A
Cockapoo	3	7,910	-26%	5%	6.15%	0
Cocker Spaniel	4	7,835	-9%	5%	4.96%	0
Labrador Retriever	5	7,165	-6%	4%	4.38%	0
Chihuahua	6	6,390	-6%	4%	3.91%	0
English Bulldog	7	6,160	1%	4%	3.49%	1
German Shepherd	8	5,885	5%	4%	3.21%	1
Miniature Dachshund	9	5,338	62%	3%	1.89%	9
Staffordshire Bull Terrier	10	4,890	33%	3%	2.1%	5
Dachshund	11	3,988	-12%	2%	2.61%	0
Mixed Breed	12	3,890	-70%	2%	7.55%	-10
Pug	13	3,820	-4%	2%	2.27%	0
Shih Tzu	14	3,668	-4%	2%	2.18%	0
Pomeranian	15	3,508	-2%	2%	2.06%	2
Jack Russell	16	3,455	-21%	2%	2.5%	-4
Border Collie	17	3,453	-24%	2%	2.61%	-7
Cavapoo	18	3,275	-10%	2%	2.08%	-2
Yorkshire Terrier	19	2,095	-18%	1%	1.47%	0
Siberian Husky	20	2,005	26%	1%	0.91%	5

Large differences in availability of dogs depending on where you live

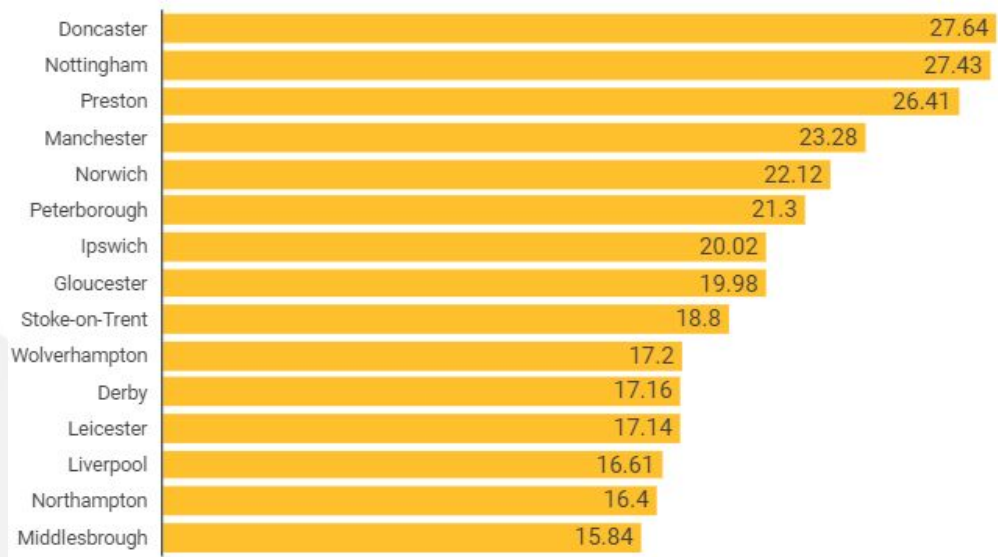
London remains the UK town with the most number of dogs available for sale, with c.7,600 dogs/puppies being rehomed until 30 April 2022, while Birmingham has swapped places again with Manchester as the #2 spot.

Advertised Dogs/Puppies per Town, Jan-April 2022

Rank vs. 1 year ago: 0 1 -1 0 0 0 2 -1 1 -2 1 1 -2 0 0



Advertised Dogs/Puppies per '000 population, Jan-April 2022

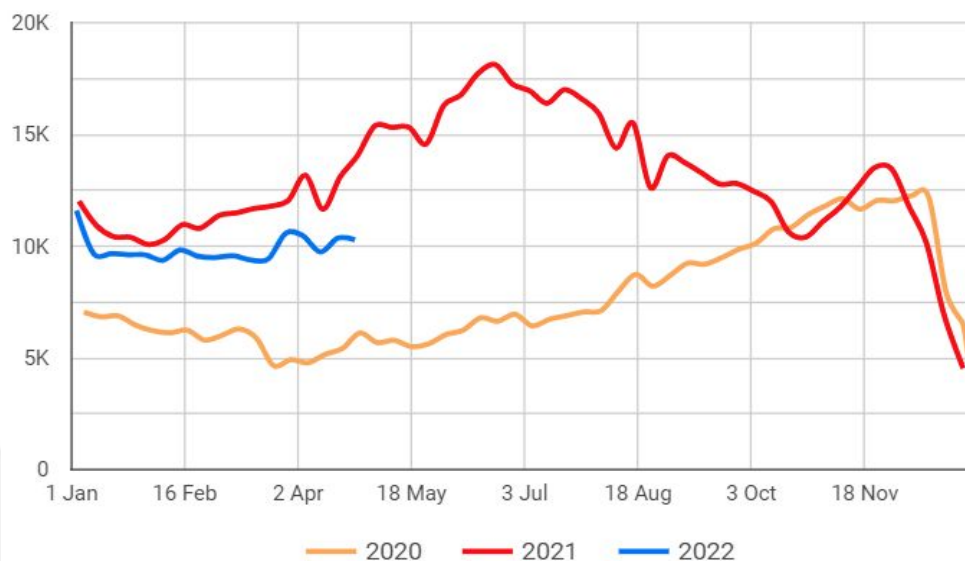


However, the perspective of the population paints a very different view of how common it is to rehome a dog/puppy, depending on where you live. For example, if you live in Doncaster, spotting a newly rehomed puppy is almost twice as high as in Middlesbrough. In fact, for every 1,000 people living in Doncaster, 24 dogs/puppies were rehomed up until the 30th of April 2022.

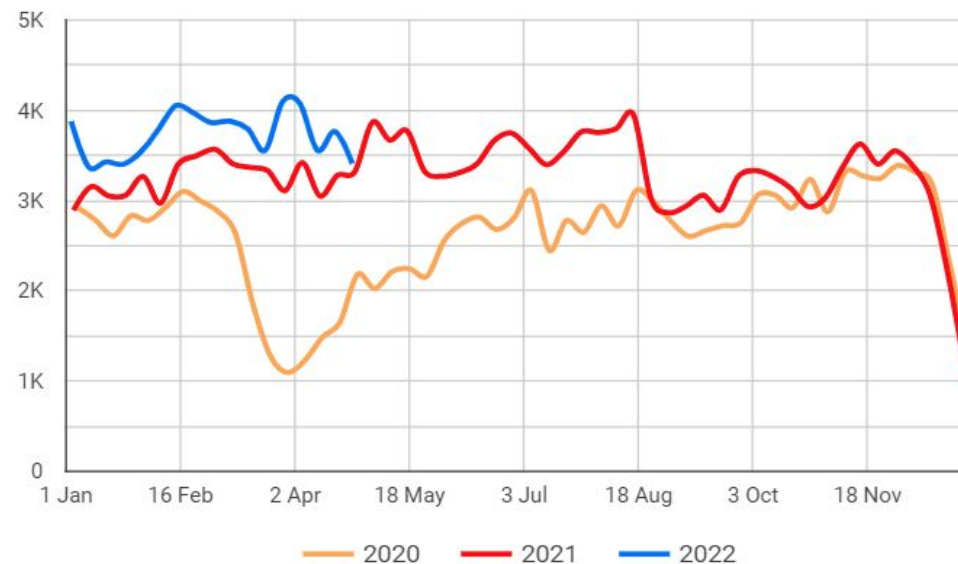
False notion regarding reselling of dogs bought during Covid-19 peak

A widespread notion regarding the surge in pet ownership during Covid-19 is that people now are abandoning their “pandemic puppies” by reselling them or giving them up for adoption. However, our data shows that the surge of advertisements on Pets4Homes thus far can be traced back to new litters - not reselling. We see a significant increase in puppy litters from our breeders in response to the increased demand, while non-puppy dogs for sale, which constitutes the main proportion of resold dogs, were principally the same in 2022 as in 2021.

Advertised Puppies (age < 120 days) For Sale, Weekly

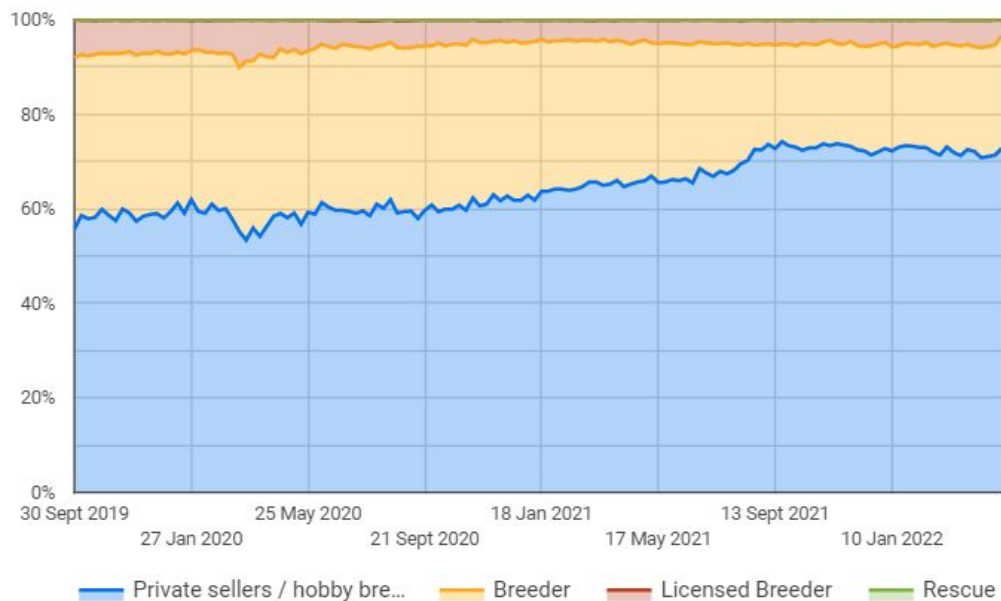


Advertised Dogs (age >=120 days) For Sale, Weekly



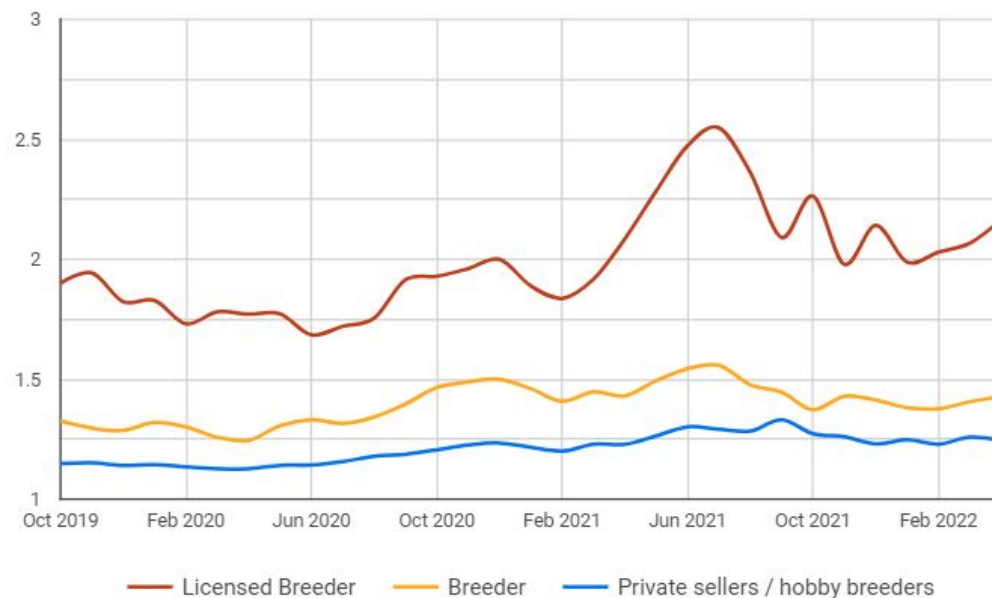
Hobby breeders represent the bulk of the increase in dogs/puppies for sale

Share of Unique Sellers, Weekly



The share of Hobby breeders and Individuals' has increased amongst unique sellers from c.55% pre-pandemic to c.75% in April 2022. The vastly different circumstances during and after the pandemic, where most people have been working from home, seem to have given hobby breeders the time necessary to be able to breed a litter.

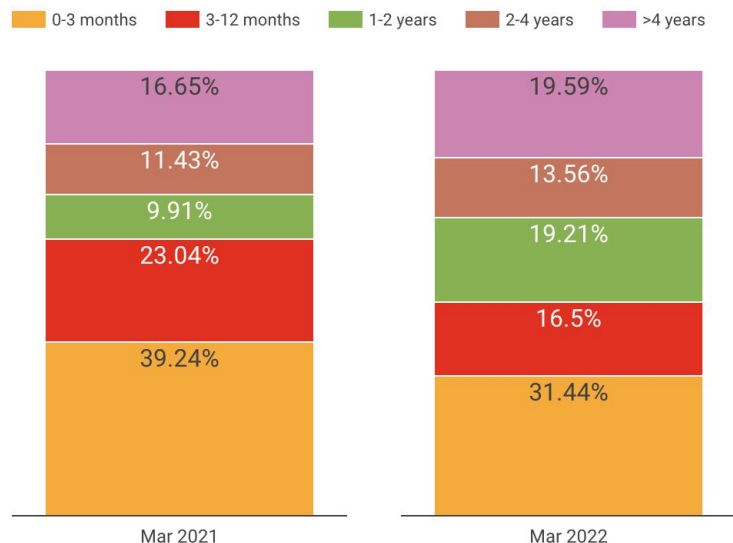
Adverts per Seller Type, Monthly



The average number of litters per seller has returned to normal levels seen pre-pandemic, with licensed breeders on average having two litters per year, breeders having 1.4 litters per year, and hobby breeders having 1.2 litters per year.

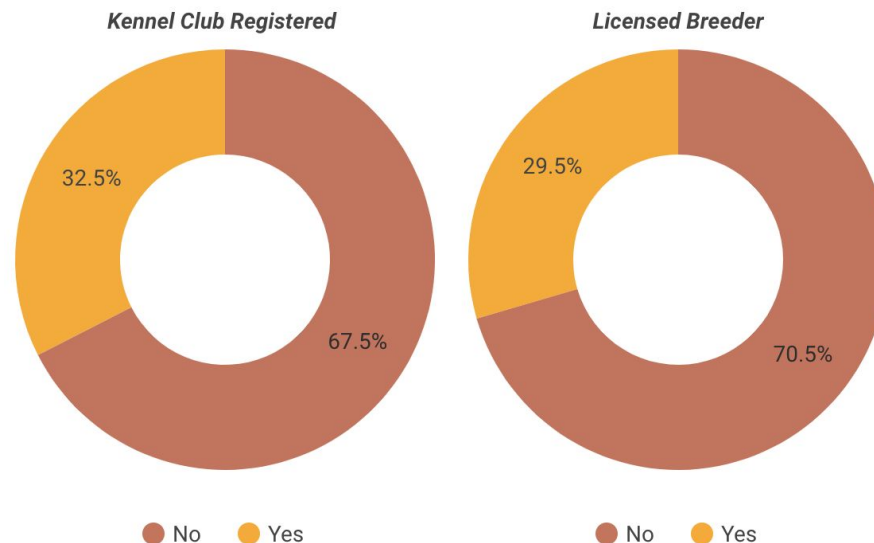
Previous sellers returning to market

Active Time as Breeder, Share of Unique Sellers



In 2022 the number of breeders breeding for the first time dropped from c.40% a year ago to 31%. In 2022, 20% of sellers have been breeding for >4 years.

KC Status and Licensing, Share of Adverts



The share of Kennel Club registered dogs/puppies for sale has increased from 31.2% in June 2021 to 32.5% in April 2022. At the same time, the number of dogs/puppies that come from council licensed registered sellers has increased from 22.1% in June 2021 to 29.5% by April 2022.

From 1st October 2018 the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 came into effect. An animal activities license is required for anyone who keeps a breeding establishment for dogs which meets the following conditions: a) If in a 12 month period their dogs give birth to 3 litters or more, b) Anyone "in the business" of breeding and selling dogs needs to be licensed regardless of the number of litters they have in a 12 month period.

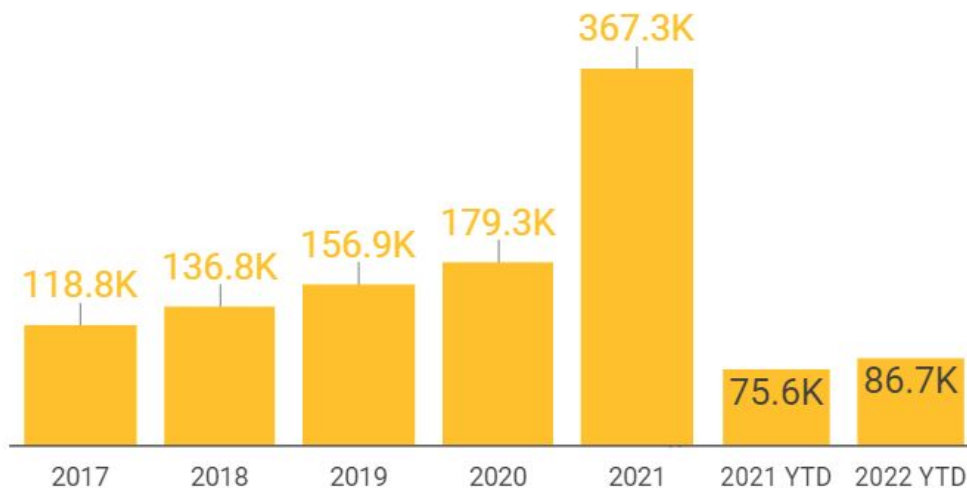
Number of cats rehomed follows same trend as in 2021

Advertised Cats/Kittens For Sale, Weekly



87k
Cats/Kittens rehomed up until April 2022

Advertised Cats For Sale - Last 5 Years



Advertisements of cats have been on a steady increase for years, growing by an average annual growth rate of 13.2% since 2016. This trend accelerated during 2021, with 367k cats/kittens being rehomed in 2021, increasing 108% vs. 2020. In 2022, the number of cats available for rehoming has grown by 16% vs. the same period last year.

Mixed breed cats decreasing dramatically in favour of British Shorthair

The [British Shorthair](#) remains the most common breed in the UK, representing >20% of all cats rehomed. Mixed breed cats have seen a drop in share from more than half of all cats rehomed in 2021 to c.31% in 2022.

This year, the biggest mover for cats is the [British Longhair cat](#), which saw an increase of 157% vs. last year.

However, it is still an uncommon cat breed representing c.1.9% of all cats rehomed.



Advertised Cats/Kittens For Sale by Breed, Jan-April 2022

Breed	Rank	# cats ▼	% cats change	% share	% share prev year	rank vs last year
Mixed Breed	1	15,333	-29%	30.3%	50.7%	0
British Shorthair	2	10,705	71%	21.2%	14.76%	0
Ragdoll	3	5,915	49%	11.7%	9.4%	0
Bengal	4	4,383	79%	8.7%	5.78%	0
Maine Coon	5	3,400	78%	6.7%	4.52%	0
Sphynx	6	2,020	73%	4.0%	2.76%	0
Persian	7	1,348	20%	2.7%	2.66%	0
Scottish Fold	8	1,238	108%	2.4%	1.4%	0
British Longhair	9	963	157%	1.9%	0.89%	1
Russian Blue	10	780	136%	1.5%	0.78%	1
Siamese	11	770	62%	1.5%	1.12%	-2
Savannah	12	673	107%	1.3%	0.77%	0
Norwegian Forest Cat	13	325	110%	0.6%	0.37%	3
Oriental	14	293	80%	0.6%	0.38%	1
Siberian	15	278	34%	0.5%	0.49%	-2
Bombay	16	255	127%	0.5%	0.27%	2
Turkish Angora	17	243	62%	0.5%	0.35%	0
Exotic	18	225	36%	0.4%	0.39%	-4
American Shorthair	19	223	107%	0.4%	0.25%	0
Burmese	20	173	82%	0.3%	0.22%	0

The popularity of Rabbits is increasing

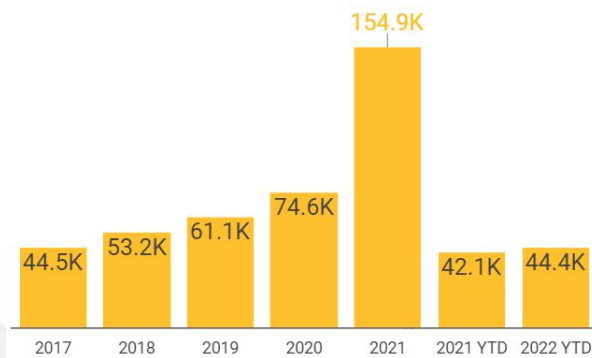
Advertised Rabbits For Sale, Weekly



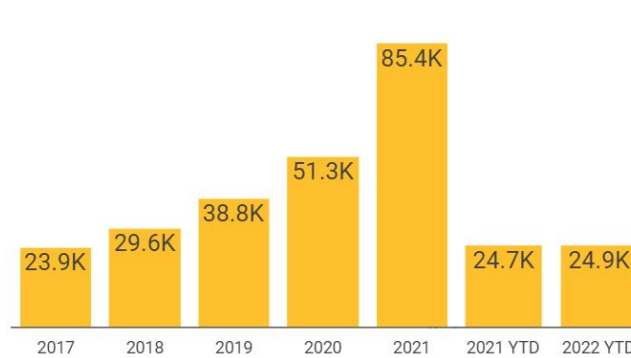
Advertised Rodents For Sale, Weekly



Advertised Rabbits For Sale - Last 5 Years



Advertised Rodents For Sale - Last 5 Years



Rabbits for sale have seen the most significant relative increase over 2021 than any other animal type. The number of rabbits sold in 2021 grew by 108%. The popularity of rodents has also seen a steady increase in the past five years, growing at 66% in 2021.





Richard Saunders

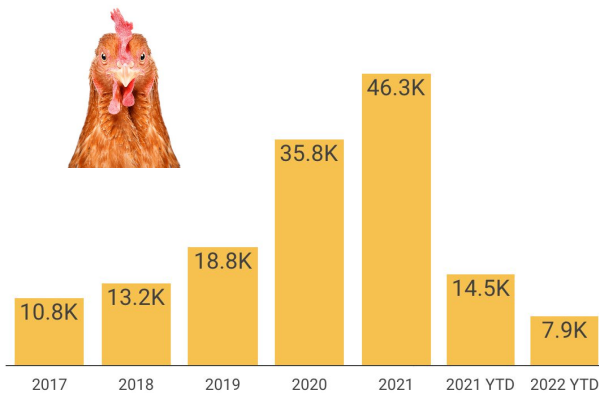
BSc (Hons) BVSc FRSB CBiol DZooMed
(Mammalian) DipECZM(ZHM) MRCVS

“The third industry report by Pets4Homes is an interesting insight into rabbit sales numbers, which helps give us a picture of the rabbit population in the UK, and guide policy. From the information in this we can see that rabbit sales are on the rise since last year. This matches out own findings where we have seen the number of rabbit breeders soar during lockdown and we are not at all surprised that rabbit sales have increased above other species.

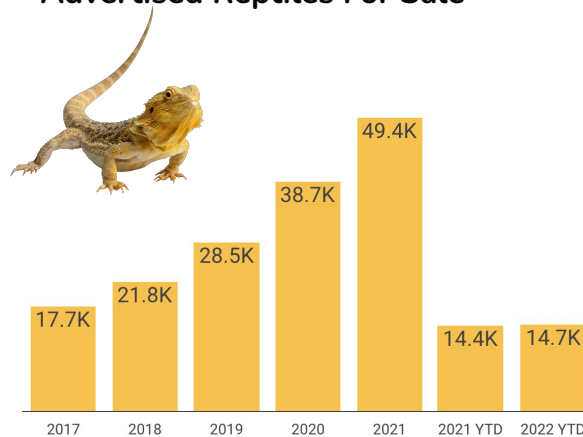
Whilst things have not returned to pre-pandemic levels, they appear to be on the way back up. This means that we have to prepare for an increasing population, and all that they require, including preventative health care (vaccination, neutering etc) and education of new rabbit owners to care for their new pets. The increasing numbers will inevitably mean an increase in unwanted pets and greater pressure on rescues, which are already struggling due to numbers of rabbits relinquished during lockdown. Our advice would be do lots of research and only take on rabbits if you can provide them with the right care and environment for around 10 years and always look check out the ‘rescue’ section first!”

Coming out of lockdown Poultry is seeing the largest decline in supply

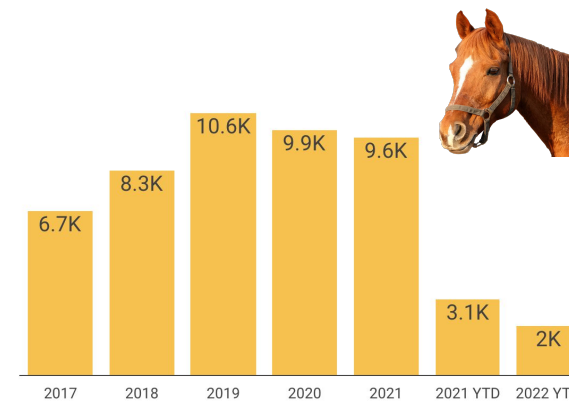
Advertised Poultry For Sale



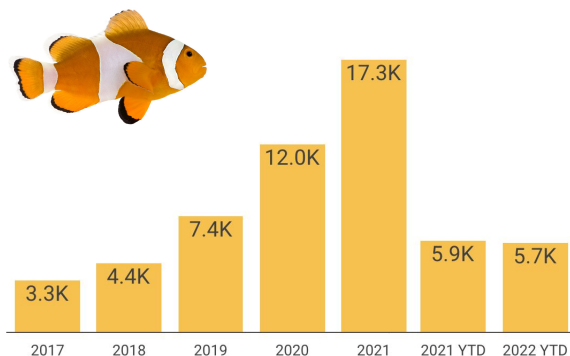
Advertised Reptiles For Sale



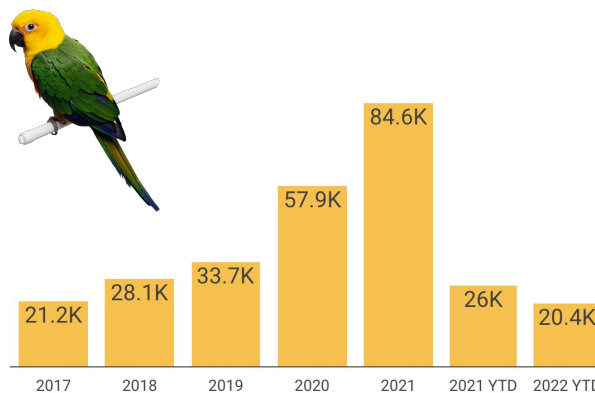
Advertised Horses For Sale



Advertised Fish For Sale



Advertised Birds For Sale



The sale of horses has seen a negative trend in recent years, decreasing in 2020 and 2021. In 2022, we have witnessed reptiles and fish maintaining roughly the same number of pets for sale, whereas poultry and birds have dropped by 45% and 22%, respectively.



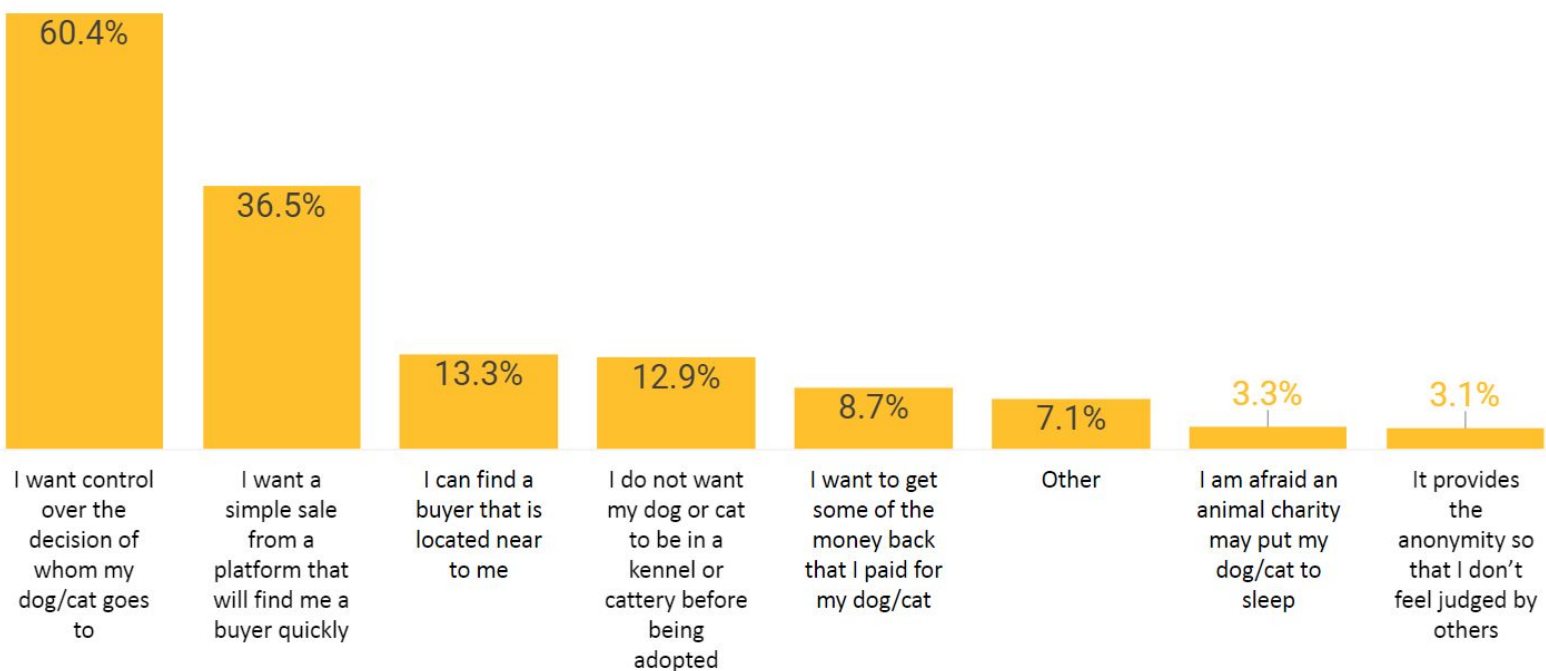
As of June 2021, we enforce a complete ban on the sale of Anacondas, Burmese Python, Reticulated Python, African Rock Python, Spider Morphs, and Enigma Morphs on Pets4Homes. While these species are legal, they are not suitable to be kept as family pets.

Are sellers willing to use rescue centres for their dogs/cats?

16% of sellers would have considered using a rescue charity/rehoming centre. The primary motivations for selling their pet online rather than at a rescue charity/rehoming centre are related to control over the decision of whom the dog/cat goes to (60%). In comparison, only 8.7% stated that the primary motivation was recouping the money spent on getting the dog/cat.

What were your motivations for going to an online platform to sell or find home for your pet?

% of respondents, more than one option available



16%

of sellers stated that they would have considered using a rescue charity to find a new home for their pet

Section 4

The post-lockdown effect on prices





Dog/Puppy prices are starting to decline

The drastic growth in demand, coupled with a lack of increase in the number of advertised dogs for sale, led to the average price for dogs more than doubling (2.5x) in March 2021 compared to pre-Covid.

£876

Avg. Dog/Puppy price before Covid-19

£2,237

Avg. Dog/Puppy price in March 2021

£1,329

Avg. Dog/Puppy price in April 2022

Average dog prices £, Weekly



As expected, prices have started to come down from record levels as demand is tapering off, while the number of available dogs has increased. Interestingly, prices seem to have stabilised at a higher level than pre-pandemic at c. £1,300 per dog/puppy advertised.

While prices have decreased, they are still far above pre-pandemic prices. Looking closer at price trends within the most popular dog breeds, we can see that the [American Bulldog](#) has seen the most significant price drop, with soon-to-be owners facing paying 60% less than what they would have paid in the first half of 2021.

The price for the poodle cross breeds [Cavapoo](#), [Cockapoo](#), and [Labradoodles](#) all fetch more than twice the price of a [Border Collie](#) or [Patterdale Terrier](#).

35%

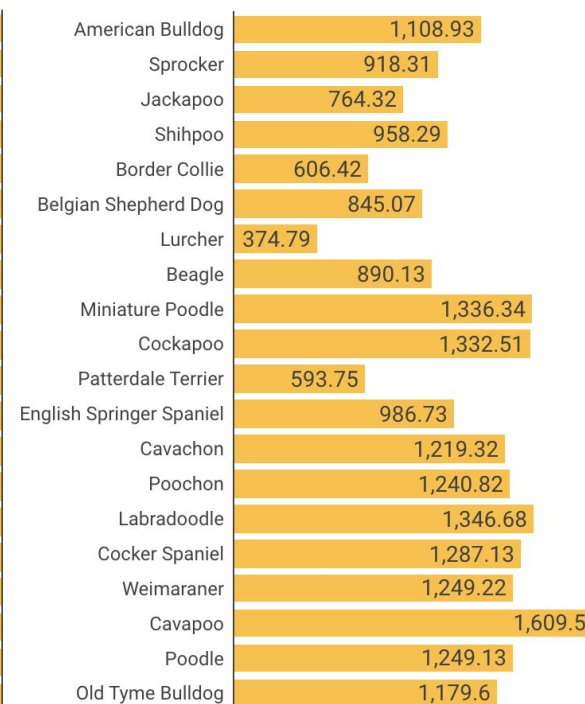
The Average Price Decrease

For Dogs in Jan-April 2022 vs. Jan-April 2021

Most common dog breeds sorted by price decrease (Jan-April 2021 vs Jan-April 2022)



Most common dog breeds sorted by price (£), Jan-April 2022



£1,610

Average price of a Cavapoo in 2022
(45% decrease vs 2021)

£1,347

Average price of a Labradoodle in 2022
(45% decrease vs 2021)

£1,337

Average price of a Miniature Poodle in 2022
(47% decrease vs 2021)

£1,333

Average price of a Cockapoo in 2022
(47% decrease vs 2021)

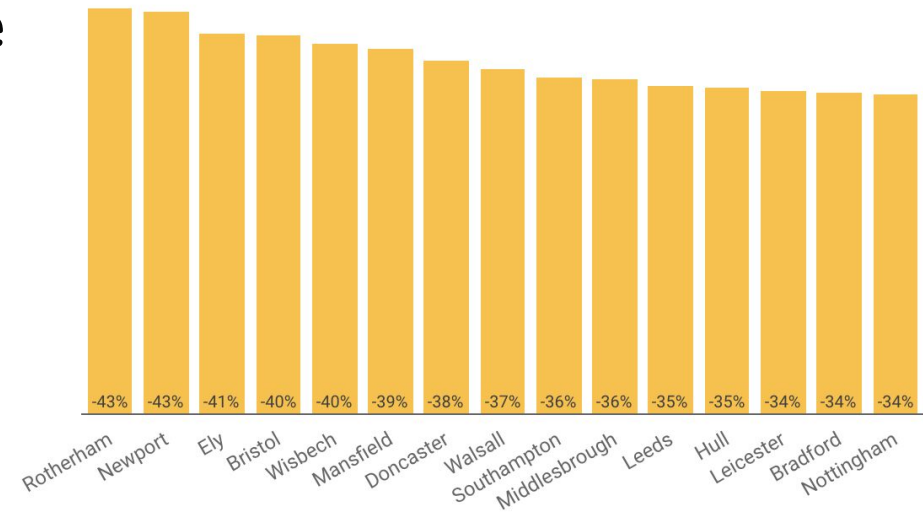


Prices in Rotherham dropped by 43%, but it's still one of the cheapest areas to buy a dog

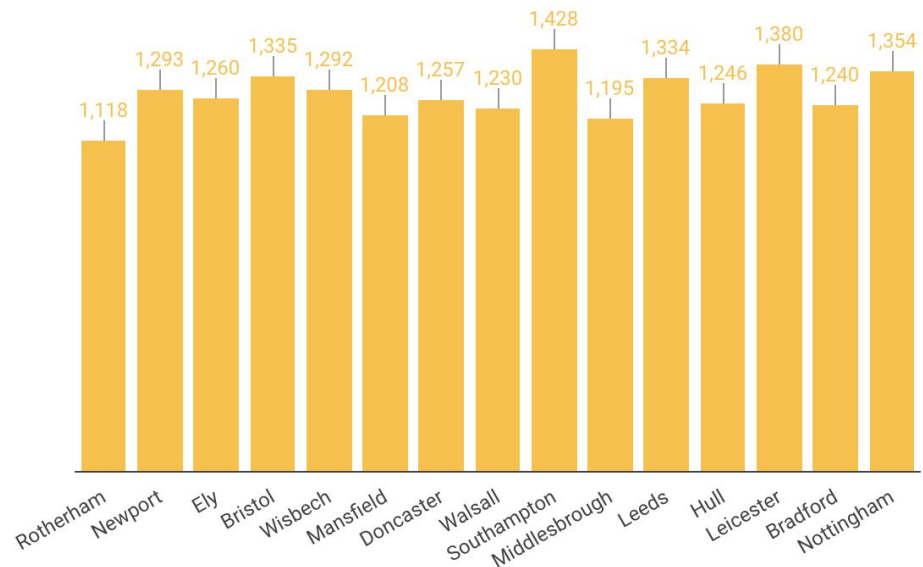
The chart on the left shows the regions where prices have dropped the most in 2022 vs. last year. While all areas saw a decline in price levels for dogs/puppies, prices only decreased by 17% in Glasgow and Swansea.

The general price level in a location is to a great extent determined by which breeds are popular in that area. Southampton, for instance, where the expensive breeds [American Bully](#) and the [French Bulldog](#) are the top 2 breeds, has an average price level of £1,428, which is 8% higher than average.

Price decrease for Dogs/Puppies in 2022 by Top 15 Cities in the UK (£)



Average Price per Dog/Puppy by Top 15 Cities in the UK (£)



£1,428

Average dog price in Southampton in 2022

£1,118

Average dog price in Rotherham in 2022



Significant changes in prices for cats

The price of an [American Shorthair](#) has dropped by a whopping 62% in 2022 compared to the same period last year, whereas the [Oriental](#), [Burmese](#), and [Maine Coon](#) have all increased in prices.

For those with expensive taste, the most costly breed on the list of common cats/kittens is the [Savannah](#), with an average price of £1,240 - 24% less expensive than last year. Cat lovers hoping to bring home any one of the 20 most sought after cat breeds can expect to pay 20% less than during the same period last year. The only breed to increase in price was the [Oriental](#) with a 7% increase vs. last year.

20%

The Average Price Decrease
For Cats in Jan-April 2022 vs. Jan-April 2021

£1,240

Average price of a Savannah in 2022
(24% decrease vs 2021)

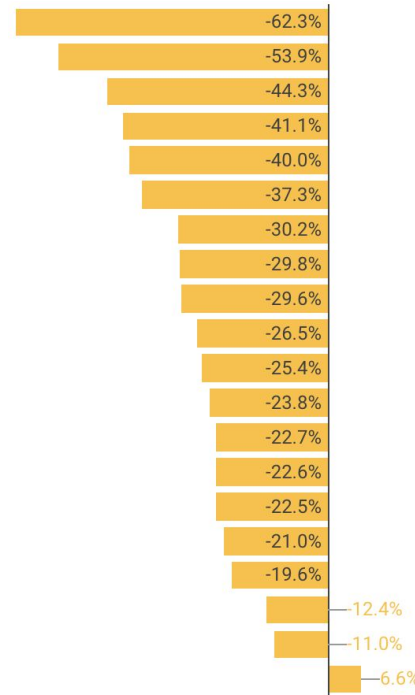
£883

Average price of a Maine Coon in 2022
(12% decrease vs 2021)

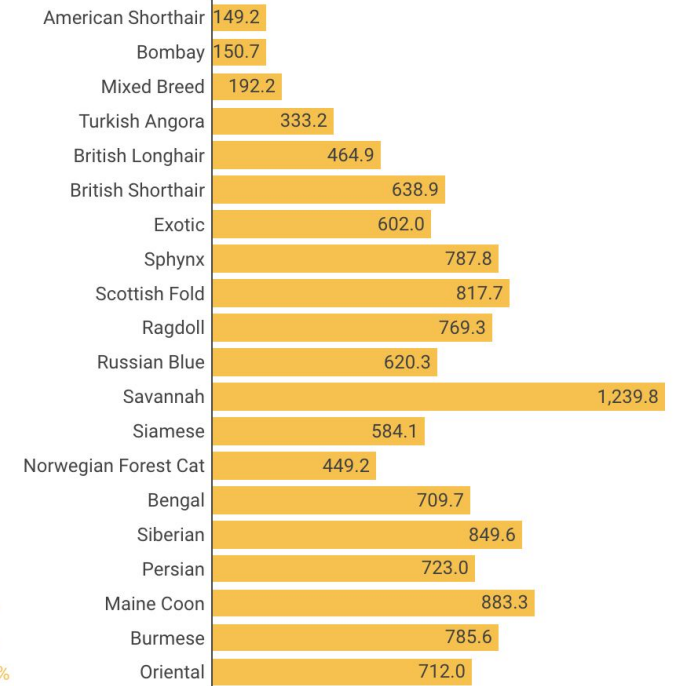
£850

Average price of a Siberian in 2022
(11% decrease vs 2021)

Most common cat breeds sorted by price decrease
(Jan-March 2021 vs Jan-March 2022)



Most common cat breeds sorted by price (£), Jan-March 2022





Section 5

Trust & Safety

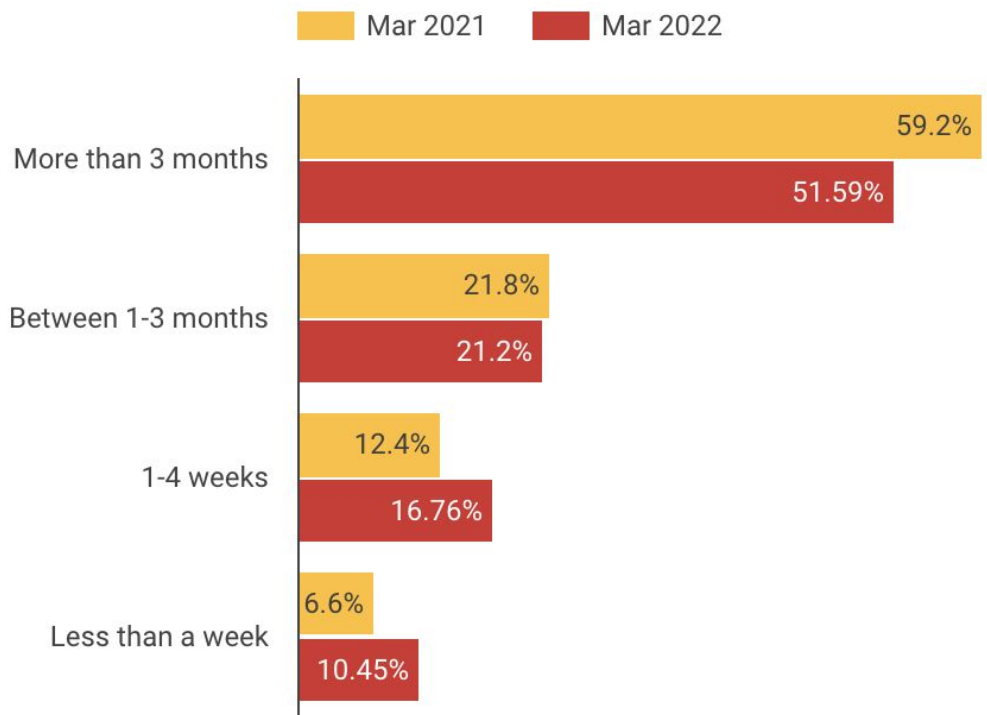


Still gaps in buyer research and knowledge

Rehoming a pet is a highly emotional purchase and is unfortunately occasionally made on impulse, without proper research being made. While less than 0.1% of pet rehoming warrants action by our Trust & Safety team, almost all of those incidents are related to buyers ignoring clear warning signs that something is not right. As a result, in addition to strengthening Pets4Homes vetting and seller verification procedures over the year, Pets4Homes has also put significant effort into making prospective pet owners aware of the common pitfalls when rehoming a pet. In 2022, 78% claim to have read the Pets4Home's checklist.

Worryingly, more than 10% stated they spent less than a week researching which pet breed they wanted (vs. 7% in June 2021).

How much time have you spent researching which pet breed you want to get?



78%
Have read Pets4Homes' safe rehoming checklist relevant for the specific breed

88%
Are aware of the Animal Welfare Act

47%
Of prospective dog buyers have heard of Lucy's Law

<3%
Stated that they were planning on rehoming a pet as a gift to someone else



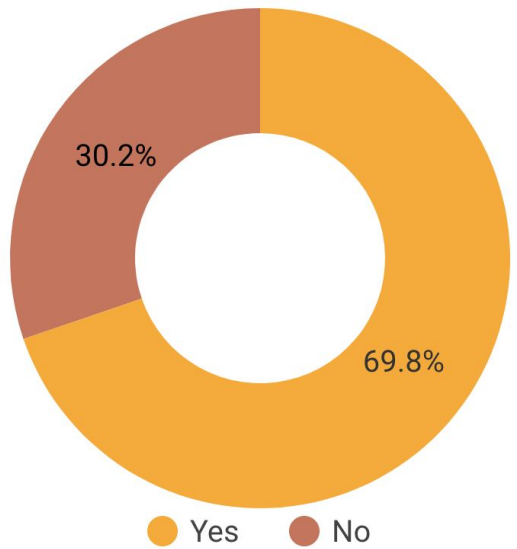
Source: Survey conducted on Pets4Homes. Respondents: 4,170

Buyers still need to be more vigilant

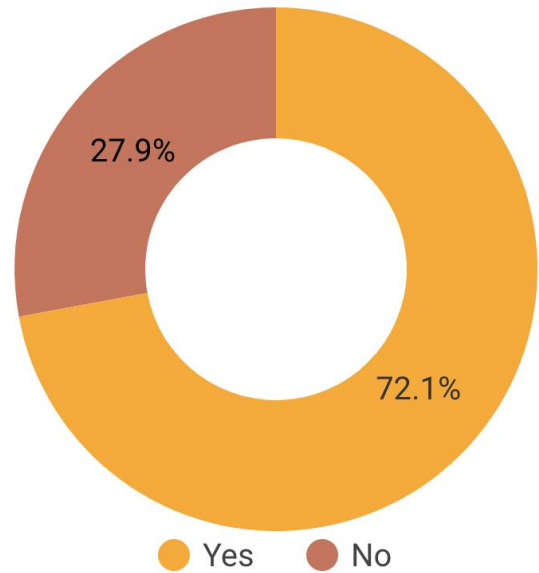
One of the most critical aspects of rehoming a puppy/kitten is to view the puppy/kitten interact with its mother at the breeder's premises. A buyer should never accept any excuse whatsoever to meet at a separate location or not see the mother, as this will ensure that the breeder is the person who has bred the puppy/kitten.

Further, every puppy must be microchipped by law, and there are plans to introduce the same legislation for cats.

Did you see the puppy/kitten interact with its mother?



Did you receive proof of microchip details before collecting your puppy/kitten?



Lucy - Cocker Spaniel

Lucy's Law is a regulation aimed to tackle the low welfare, high volume supply of puppies and kittens by banning their third-party commercial sale in England. 'Lucy's Law' means that anyone wanting to get a new puppy or kitten in England must now buy direct from a breeder or consider adopting from a rescue centre instead. Lucy had many ailments but was adopted by Lisa Garner, who campaigned with vet Marc Abraham to prevent further maltreatment of such dogs. The law came into effect in April 2020.

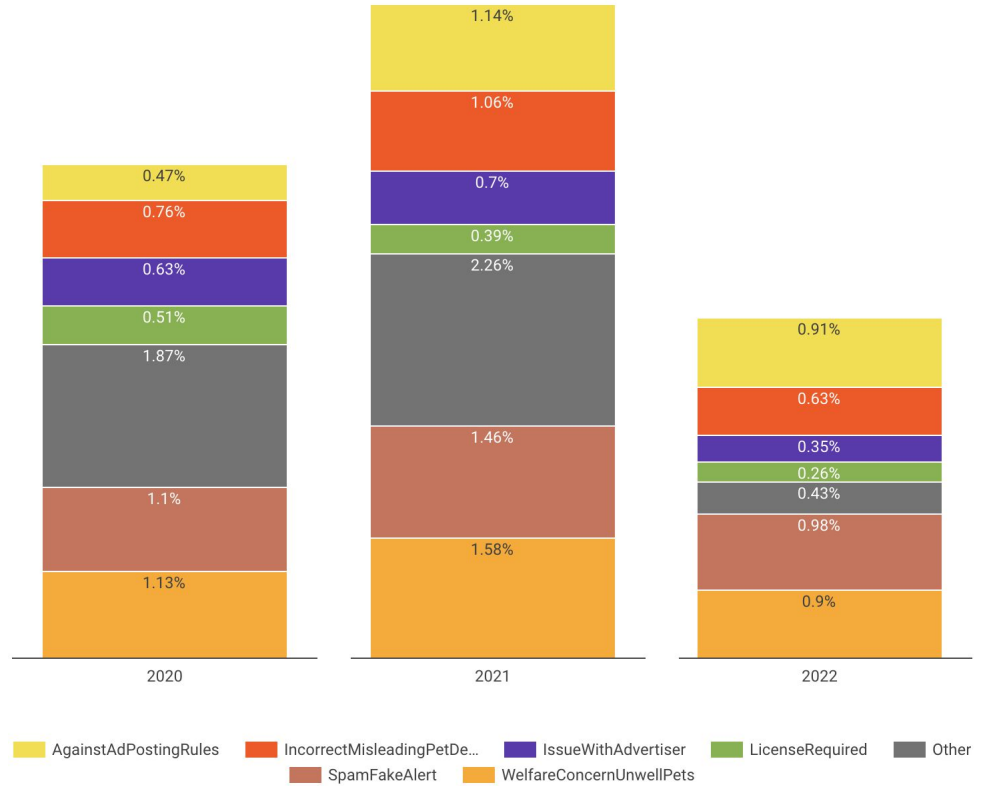


How to avoid the ‘Covid-Con’ when buying your ‘Pandemic Puppy’

High demand and rapidly rising prices have created a lucrative market for puppy smugglers. As a result, Pets4Homes has introduced stricter verification measures and the first deposit scheme of its kind in the UK designed to protect our users.

More than 40% of adverts that are submitted to Pets4Homes do not fulfill Pets4Homes’ pre-screening criteria and advert rules and are not published on the website. The share of reported adverts suspected of being fake has dropped from 1.5% to less than 1.0% compared to the same period last year.

Share of adverts reported by users by reason



Emilienne Ronzier-joly
Breeder Vetting Officer

“It is a monumental challenge to manually review over 40,000 active breeders and more than 1 million pets rehomed through Pets4Homes each year. Our zero-tolerance approach to unscrupulous breeders and irresponsible sellers has proven effective with less than 0.1% of new owners reporting issues in 2022. We will however continue to build on the safeguards we have introduced over the last 12 months and hope to deepen our collaboration with the RSPCA, PAAG and other stakeholders to further increase the safety of using Pets4Homes.”



How to avoid scams

Keep communication on Pets4Homes

Our system is secure, allows pictures to be sent and enables you to report suspicious behaviour to us. Scammers will typically divert communication to email or whatsapp since it is anonymous.

Use the Pets4Homes Safe Deposit functionality

Never send money outside of Pets4Homes unless you have viewed the pet at the seller's premises and are confident that the seller is genuine. Safety deposit video.



What we ask of you as a prospective pet owner

✓ Do your research

Rehoming a pet is a massive commitment. Make sure that you have **researched the breed fully** and ensured that it's the right pet for you. **Deep dive:** read our [breed profiles](#).

✓ Confirm that the advertiser is genuine

Arrange to **visit the pet at the advertiser's home**. Do not accept any excuses for sending money without a viewing having taken place, or if the advertiser attempts to meet you at any other location than their own home. **Deep dive:** [how to avoid potential scams](#).

✓ Puppies/kittens **MUST** be viewed with mother

The advertiser should **ALWAYS** let you **see the puppies/kittens with their mother**. If you are denied this, it could be a sign the pets have not been bred by the advertiser and there is a risk they have been imported. Pets4Homes do not allow third party sale of puppies/kittens. **Deep dive:** [10 pitfalls to avoid](#).

✓ Never collect a pet below the minimum age requirement

Puppies, kittens and rabbits must be at least 8 weeks old and fully weaned before they can leave their mothers. Deep dive: [Minimum age requirements for different pet types](#).

✓ Check the health of the pet

The seller should be willing to let you take the pet to a Vet of your choice for a health check and return the pet within 48 hours for a full refund. If the puppy has already been health checked, make sure you have this document and phone their vet. Deep dive: [How to check the health of a dog](#).

✓ Ask lots of questions to the breeder

Responsible breeders are keen for their pet to find a loving home and will gladly answer questions about their pet. Deep dive: [Most important questions to ask the breeder](#).

✓ If you have concerns, walk away

If you believe a pet may be subject to irresponsible breeding, walk away and [report the seller](#) to us immediately. Please refer to the full checklist for the pet you are looking for [here](#).



Section 6

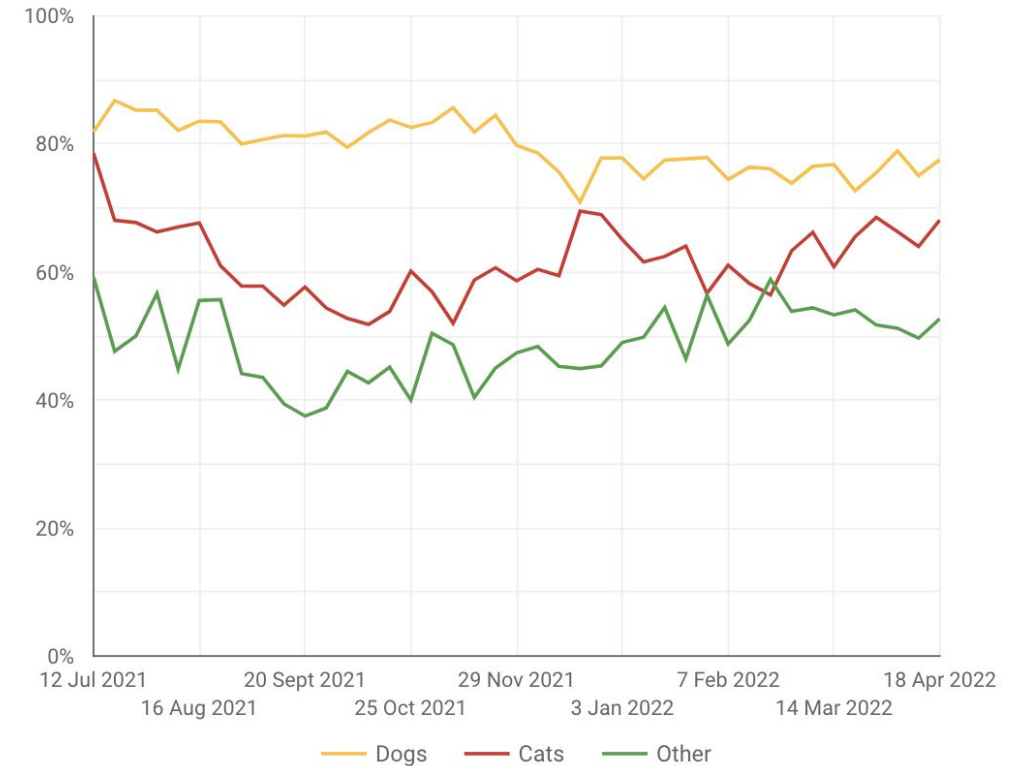
Innovations and updates to improve animal welfare



The new Safe Deposit Service is steadily increasing in popularity

The new Pets4Homes Safe Deposit service is an opt-in function that allows sellers who give up a form of ID verification to set the required deposit amount, which buyers then pay into a third-party escrow account. Following a pet viewing, the funds are released only once both parties confirm that they are satisfied. The Safe Deposit service has been designed to give buyers peace of mind that their money is safe. The deposit service has kept on growing in popularity since the launch in August 2020, and we are currently seeing daily gross transaction volumes around £100,000 with c.80% of all dog adverts having the Safe Deposit service enabled. However, our ambition is that 100% of all our dog adverts have safety deposit enabled, making rehoming safer for all parties.

Share of pets where the Safe Deposit Service is enabled



Axel Lagercrantz
CEO of Pet Media Group

"Fuelled by the increased demand for pets during the pandemic we realised that deposits had become a rule rather than an exception. This is why we are proud to be able to introduce the first safe deposit service of its kind in the UK, specifically implemented for animal lovers, responsible breeders, charities and shelters. We prioritise responsible practices and we continually work to ensure trust, safety and convenience for buyers and sellers alike."

Applying bank-grade security to combat fraud and unscrupulous breeders

ID Verification to de-anonymise sellers

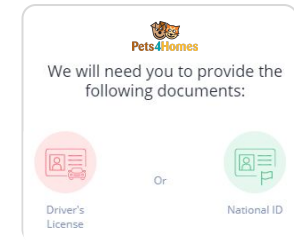
In the second quarter of 2022, we launched a feature that dramatically improves the safety of Pets4Homes: our bank-grade ID verification feature, which will be rolled out in a phased approach.

Ever since Pet Media Group took over the operations of Pets4Homes in mid-2019, we have noticed that the most effective way of keeping unscrupulous breeders off our platform has been to require them to verify themselves. Verifying those who use the Safe Deposit service has effectively deterred those who do not want to use our platform, and we are now rolling this out to cover all pets sold.

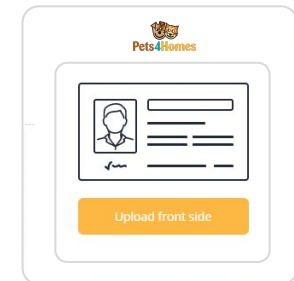


How does our ID verification work?

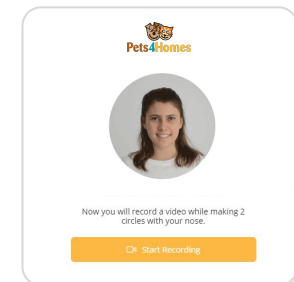
- 1 User chooses to take a picture of their driver's license or ID. In order to ensure recency, the photo has to be taken on the spot (an old photo will not be accepted by our system)



- 2 The user is instructed on how to take the photos of the ID, which includes both front and back side of their ID. The data is then sent to a bank-grade encrypted secure server for analysis.



- 3 As a final step, the user is asked to take a picture of themselves. The facial features of the person are then analysed using artificial intelligence to detect whether the person on the photo is the same as the person on the ID.



Updates of Pets4Homes policies and processes to improve animal welfare and crack down on unscrupulous sellers

Ban of cropped ears and docked tails

Prior to 4th January 2021, we allowed dogs to be sold with cropped ears if it could be proven that it had been done legally outside of the UK and brought to the UK legally. We also allowed docked tails if it had been carried out in accordance with The Docking of Working Dogs' Tails (England) Regulations 2007. As of 5th January, Pets4Homes made the decision in the name of animal welfare to completely ban any sale of dogs with cropped ears or docked tails, regardless of the circumstances.

Ban of species not suitable as pets

After discussions with PAAG, we have decided to enforce a complete ban on the sale of Anacondas, Burmese Python, Reticulated Python, African Rock Python, Spider Morphs, and Enigma Morphs on Pets4Homes as of 11th June 2021. While these species are legal, they are not suitable to be kept as family pets.

Partnership with Scottish SPCA

We are proud to have joined the working group Tackling the Puppy Trade led by the SSPCA. We are also proud to support SSPCA's new Assured Puppy Breeders Scheme, pointing the public in the direction of responsible dog breeders. Thanks to the collaboration, the scheme has seen a 100% increase in breeders since 16th March 2021.

Continue to support worthwhile petitions

Supporting and campaigning for petitions concerning animal welfare is a key focus for us. Below are some of the petitions we have supported during the year:

- [Ban the exploitative import of young puppies for sale in the UK](#)
- [Stop the rising number of ear-cropped dogs in the UK](#)
- [Make dog theft a specific criminal offence](#)
- [Create a single database of microchipped cats and dogs & make scanning mandatory](#)
- [A Hutch Is Not Enough](#)



Recently introduced animal welfare regulations

Licensing requirements clarification

Defra has released a [clarification](#) that if a person has a trading income above the HMRC trading income allowance of £1,000, they do not automatically qualify as a business. A common misconception has previously been that all sellers need to have a license to sell a pet worth more than £1,000.



The Queen's speech takeaways

Cat microchipping

Cat microchipping is to become mandatory across the UK. Owners will be required by law to have their cat microchipped by the time they have reached 20 weeks of age ([read more](#)).

Animals to be formally recognised as sentient beings in domestic law

Vertebrate animals will be recognised as sentient beings for the first time in UK law. Through this bill, any new legislation will now henceforth have to consider the fact that animals can experience feelings such as pain or joy ([read more](#)).

Maximum prison sentence

The maximum prison sentence for animal cruelty has been raised from six months to five years. This will come into effect summer of 2022 ([read more](#)).

Scotland harmonising rules to England

Updated licensing requirements

With the additional regulations passed in Scotland in September 2021, it is now not permissible to breed more than three litters of dogs without a license within 12 months across the United Kingdom.

Lucy's Law introduced in Scotland and Wales

Lucy's Law was introduced in Scotland and Wales in September 2021. The law has been in force in England since April 2020 and aims to tackle puppy farming by making third-party sales of puppies and kittens illegal.

European regulations update

France regulation overhaul

The new law includes a requirement for new pet owners to sign a certificate confirming their understanding of the responsibilities and costs involved, harsher penalties for animal abandonment, closure of the last mink farms, and ban of selling of pets in pet shops ([read more](#)).

Upcoming animal welfare regulations

Changes in rules for imported pets

The new proposal includes an increase in the minimum age of dogs that can be moved into Great Britain from 15 weeks to 6 months, banning the movement of dogs that have been subjected to mutilations (e.g. cropped ears or tail docking and a ban on import of dogs who are more than 42 days pregnant [\(read more\)](#)).

Pet Theft Taskforce reform

A new criminal offence for pet abduction is set to be introduced under government plans to crack down on pet theft following the increase during the pandemic [\(read more\)](#).

Reform to microchipping

New requirements would make it compulsory for cats to be microchipped. The new proposal would also make it easier to reunite lost or stolen cats and dogs with their owners following recommendations from the Pet Theft Taskforce [\(read more\)](#). Further proposals are expected this summer to make the microchipping system work more efficiently.

Banning primates as pets

A new licensing regime is being proposed and new prohibitions on the keeping, breeding and sale of primates in England [\(read more\)](#).



Section 6

Activities of charities and rescues

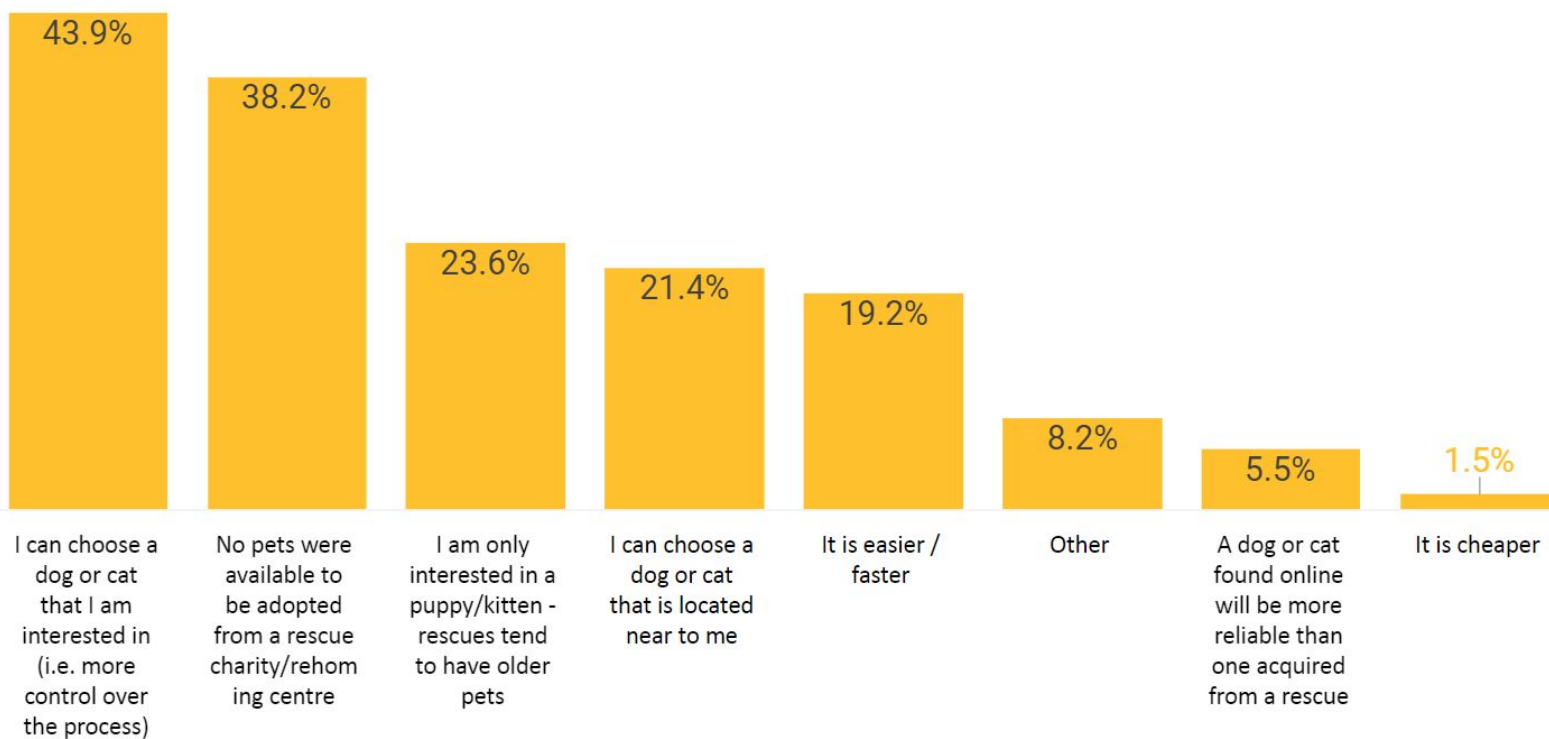


Are buyers willing to rehome rescue dogs/cats?

There were 5,232 pets advertised from rescue centres and more than 25,000 pets listed for adoption on Pets4Homes between Jan-April 2022. While 76.4% of buyers state they would be willing to use a rescue charity/rehoming centre, there seem to be barriers keeping buyers from going through with rescue/adoption.

What were your motivations for going to an online platform to buy a dog/cat rather than getting one from a rescue charity/rehoming centre?

% of respondents, more than one option available



76%

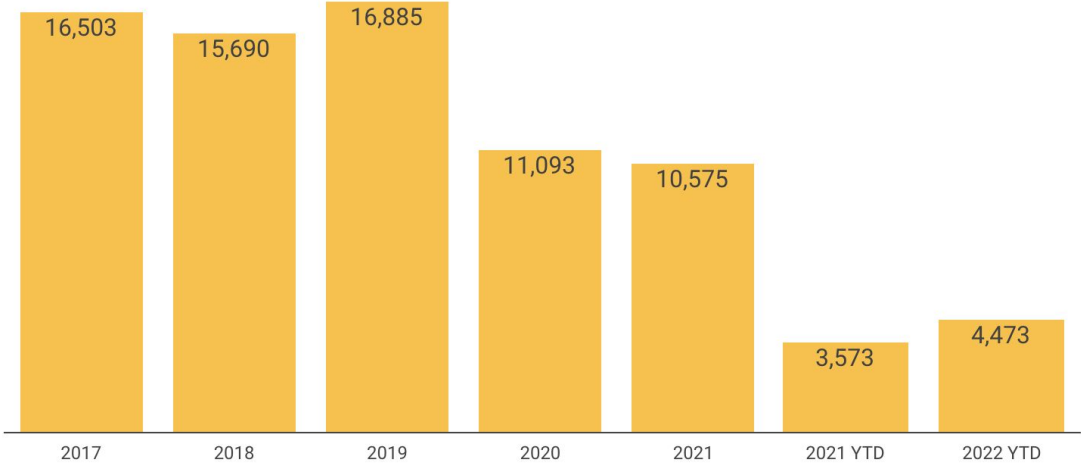
of buyers stated that they would have considered using a rescue charity



Adoption rehoming numbers remain stable

As pet purchases soared during the pandemic, there were concerns that there would be a resulting surge in the number of abandoned pets as the population faced a return to the workplace. However, Pets4Homes insights reveal that there has been just a slight increase in the number of dogs being put up for adoption through our website, comparing 2022 YTD with the previous year. The number of dogs put up for adoption has remained at relatively similar levels through 2022 as in previous years and even lower than pre-pandemic.

Pets advertised for adoption by Charities



Hannah Leach
Animal Welfare Director
Pets4Homes

“Supporting charities and rescue centres is a central part of our mission at Pets4Homes. We are delighted to be supporting pet lovers in expanding their furry families. However, we want to make sure that it is a thought through and long term decision. It is reassuring to see that we have not yet seen any correlation between the increasing demand of pets and the number of pets advertised for adoption. That being said, we continue to do our utmost to support our partner charities in whatever way they deem most appropriate as the ‘new normal’ landscape continues to shift.”

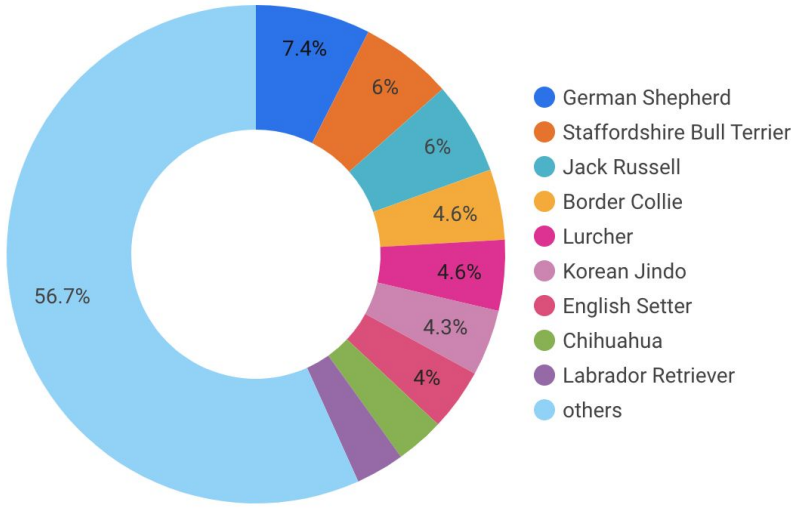


German Shepherds are the breed most put up for adoption so far in 2022

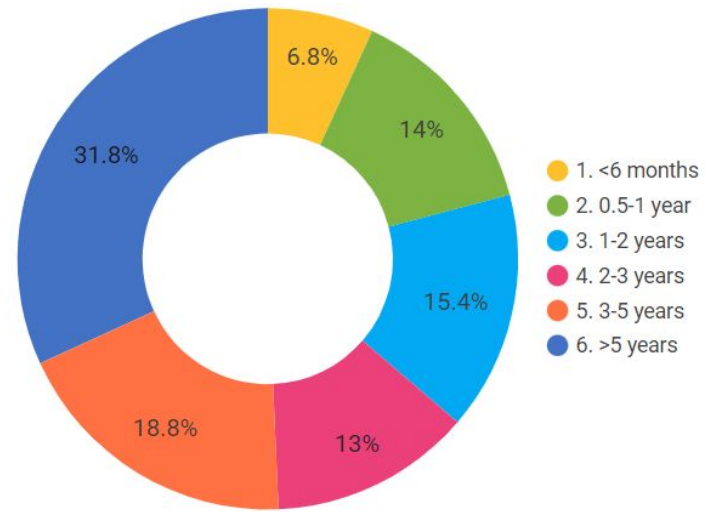
Last year, Greyhounds were the most common breed put-up for adoption, representing 16% of all adopted dogs. This year, however, Greyhounds are on the bottom of the list #9 with representing 2,7% of all adopted dogs,, and instead, the German Shepherd has gone from the 3rd most adopted dog to #1.

32% of dogs given up for adoption are older than 5 years and more than 50% are older than 3 years. The number of dogs for adoption that are younger than 6 months has decreased from 9.2% last year to 6.8% this year.

Dogs for adoption by breed



Dogs for adoption by age group



**Linda Cantle**

Director of Pet & Owner Support Services
at Woodgreen, The Animals Charity

“At Woodgreen, we too are seeing the tables turn. Rehoming applications are down while the number of pets coming through our doors is increasing – both from owners who can no longer care for them and strays in need of urgent care. More and more pet owners are also turning to us for help with their pets, particularly financial support, as the cost of living crisis leaves them unable to cover veterinary bills and other expenses. We’re proud to be in a position to help hundreds of pets and their people every month through behavioral advice and hands-on support, with many owners committed to keeping pets in loving homes wherever possible.

The new normal seems to be anything but, with challenges around every corner. The combination of a much larger pet population in the UK, and the financial and psychological uncertainty coming out of a pandemic, means the sector must work together and protect the welfare of pets. The data and insights provided by Pets4Homes contribute significantly to helping Woodgreen understand trends in acquisition and relinquishment to adapt our services and identify areas where we can have the most significant impact.”

Section 8

Methodology & About Pets4Homes



Methodology

To conduct this study, Pets4Homes analysed the data of 5,715,632 pets rehomed through the platform from January 2016 until April 2022. A survey was also conducted with 4,170 respondents.

Additionally, traffic figures on Pets4Homes were gathered through Google Analytics, while demand for each pet was measured by the number of contacts advert views that each individual pet generated.

About Pets4Homes

Pets4Homes (www.pets4homes.co.uk) is the UK's largest free online pet marketplace, relied upon by more than 7 million people monthly to rehome over 1 million pets each year. Founded in 2005 and acquired by Pet Media Group in August 2019, Pets4Homes prioritises responsible practices and works to ensure trust, safety, and convenience for buyers and sellers. Through its focus on safeguarding animal welfare, Pets4Homes has earned a rating of 4.6 out of 5 stars on Trustpilot (with over 8,000 reviews and counting).

