

Dog rehoming charities in Edinburgh need your help

As cruelty to animals has soared alongside the economic slump, charities and volunteer organisations that care for rescued dogs say they are in need of urgent help.



Since 2008, animal rescue organisations have experienced an increasing number of alerts about cruelty to and neglect of animals. Rescue charities of all sizes, including the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA), have been feeling the strain.

In March 2016, yet another [injured dog](#) was found by the SSPCA, this one abandoned in Midlothian near the A6106 at Shawfair. Throughout 2014, the SSPCA alone found homes for 6,719 animals. This does not include the dogs rescued by the 16 independent dog rescue centres and specialist breed rescue societies across the country.

Where help is needed

The Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home is the city's oldest animal welfare organisation and was originally located on Broughton Road. In 1957, the charity moved to Seafield Road East, and today it helps to find good homes for dogs that are in need of love and attention. Many of the Edinburgh shelters find they have older dogs, and there is a high proportion of Staffordshire Bull Terriers – up to 60 per cent is not unusual. Staffies are high-energy dogs with a strong temperament; however, with the right level of socialisation and training, they can make [rewarding pets](#).

Good homes wanted and more help

Dog homing charities need help from locals to allow them to keep the facilities for rescued animals going. As well as providing a good home for an abandoned dog, straightforward giving of funds is welcomed. Many rescue centres, including the Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home, have schemes where regular giving of small amounts is encouraged so that they can plan for the future. Volunteering some time to help out is very valuable, as is sponsoring individual kennels, from as little as £3.75 per month.

Business partnerships

In addition to individual and family help, business support is vital. Corporate donations and fundraisers are welcome, and there is also lots of potential for what's known as "help in kind." This is where a business makes a donation of a product rather than cash. A good example is the partnership between the pet healthcare business [Bob Martin Vetcare](#) and the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home in London. Battersea is raising funds for a new vet hospital, and partner Bob Martin has been supplying products, including cat litter and wormers for dogs, so that Battersea can contribute the money these items would have cost to the hospital fund.

The way forward

Help in kind may be the new way forward for Edinburgh's dog rescue centres when it comes to future sustainability. Just as local residents can give their time as volunteers, or make small regular donations, so local businesses have the opportunity to offer help in kind as well as cash donations. Shelters need all the things associated with taking care of a pet, but in bulk. A typical wish list might include shampoo, worming treatments, feeding bowls and, of course, toys.