

# **Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home begin their Winter Appeal**

**A record number of families have had to make the difficult decision to give up their pets this year.**

With a rise in the number of households welcoming new pets to their family during Covid, coupled with the increased costs of living, 2023 has been a busy year for the Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home (EDCH) which has taken in more pets than ever before.

So far this year, the Home has received 1,208 surrender requests (898 dogs and 479 cats). The increase in demand has left the Home unable to take in almost 9 in 10 of the requests it receives.

Additionally, since January 2023, more than 561 enquiries, a 33% increase from last year, have been made by families struggling to make ends meet and subsequently seeking support to help keep their pets at home, and there has been an increase in demand for the Home's food bank service in East and Central Scotland.

But the EDCH team has already supported 148 dogs and 72 cats to find new loving homes for life this past year and has managed to keep over 4,500 pets with their owners through community support services such as pet food banks, educational content and training, and other outreach services.

The Home has also delivered a fantastic 85 emergency dog first aid courses and an additional 144 full dog first aid qualifications to pet owners in Edinburgh, helping to keep the city's pets safe and healthy.

Piper is one pet which came into the Home earlier this year, heavily pregnant and living outside as a stray.

Piper was brought to the Home by a couple who had seen her around their neighbourhood for a couple of months. They had tried to find her owner by posting on Facebook to no avail. When they noticed that Piper's belly was getting bigger, they put it down to a potential health problem and decided to bring her to the home – luckily just in time.

Piper gave birth to 4 healthy kittens on her very first night in the Home, without which, she would have had to try and find a safe space to give birth outside and her kittens might not have survived. The team had settled the cat into the Home quickly on the night she arrived and she was able to give birth to her kittens in a safe environment. By the morning.

Just a few months later, Piper has been happily rehomed with vet nurse Lauren, who fell in love with Piper when she visited Lauren's vet practice for mastitis treatment after giving birth, and then again to be spayed.

Lauren and her partner visited Piper a couple of times at the Home and enjoyed playing with her and getting to know her. From the first night they took her home, she was snuggled up on their bed, enjoying head scratches and cuddles and is slowly gaining trust to come up to them and sit on their laps.

Lauren said: "It just feels like my life wasn't complete without having a cat and she's just fitted in so well, I feel like it was meant to be. She's honestly amazing. I love her little personality, she's independent but so friendly and affectionate as well, she's the perfect cat."

Pipers kittens; Snowflake, Calico, Atreyu, Maya are all doing well and have recently gone to their own homes.

Lindsay Fyffe-Jardine, CEO of Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home said: "Thanks to the hard work of our team, the support of

volunteers who have donated almost 2,000 hours over the course of the past year, and the generosity of the people of Edinburgh and beyond for their kind donations, we have been able to help many pets through preventative community work and by caring for and rehoming animals who come to us. However, to help us keep on top of the unprecedented increase in demand, now more than ever we're relying on funding from public donations to enable us to support owners going through hard times to stay together with their pets, or rehabilitate and rehome pets like Piper."

The Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home finds winter a difficult time as higher costs drain funds while demand for their services increases. To help get through the winter months, the Home recently launched a Winter Appeal, seeking donations to help cope with the increased demand, continue providing support to animals in need and help people to keep their pets at home.

To make a donation and to read more of their life-altering stories please visit [www.edch.org.uk/winterappeal](http://www.edch.org.uk/winterappeal) OR text SURRENDER to 70560 to donate £5.

Donations of £20 can provide a cat with the vaccinations they require to be rehomed or £100 could keep a dog warm in the Home for three months.

Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you will be opting into hearing more from Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more, text SURRENDERNOINFO instead.

The support of generous donors has kept Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home open for 140 years and given Piper and hundreds like them a safe place to recover and find love. The Home has become an important part of the city and to bring this to life Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home has photographed some of its former residents that have now been rehomed Reggie, Truffle, Martha, and

Toffee, at some of Edinburgh's other well-known locations including the Forth Bridge, Greyfriars Bobby and Edinburgh Castle.



Piper at her new home



EDCH People and Culture Manager Sandra Gilmour with 1 year old labrador Reggie.

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