

OUR
IMPACT
IN 2022

125 years of changing lives

A future of changing millions more



Pets change lives
We change theirs

Who we are



We have been changing the lives of sick, injured, and homeless pets since 1897. Pets are at the heart of everything we do and every month we continue to help thousands more.

We love the way that pets can make such an amazing difference to the people they live with. So we offer lifelong support and advice to help that unique relationship thrive.

We change lives. For pets, for people, for life. We believe that pets and their people should be able to enjoy lifelong care and support, and we won't rest until that goal becomes reality.

Rehoming

We find loving families for homeless cats, dogs, horses and small pets across the UK.

Veterinary

We provide care for sick and injured pets when their family can't afford private treatment.

Behaviour

We provide behavioural expertise so that pets, and their people, can live healthy, happy lives.

Education

We give talks and provide advice to people who may need a little help now, or in the future.

Pet bereavement support

We support people who are struggling to cope with the loss of a pet.



Cover photo:

After escaping from Ukraine with her British owner, Liam, Lucy spent four months in quarantine at our Hertfordshire rehoming centre (see section on caring in times of conflict).

For more information about our activities in 2022, you can read our Annual Report at bluecross.org.uk/publications

125 years of supporting pets and people

2022 marked the 125th anniversary of Blue Cross's foundation on 7 May 1897.

Blue Cross was founded at a time of international conflict and economic uncertainty and it certainly felt like history was repeating itself in 2022, as the horrors of the war in Ukraine unfolded and the UK found itself in the grip of a cost-of-living crisis.

The invasion of Ukraine, economic turmoil and adapting to new ways of working post-pandemic have all created additional pressures for the charity and our people. Once again, as a charity and individuals we have risen to these challenges, to ensure that pets and their people receive the support and care they need.

With millions more families now having pets in their lives, it's clear that we're needed more than ever. We're determined to provide even more of the vital support, advice and specialist care that vulnerable pets and the people who love them need, and to actively campaign to improve pet welfare.

We've come through a very challenging period in our history and had to adapt to external factors that have put our services and our people under immense pressures, but we couldn't have done it without people like you: our generous donors, volunteers, employees, legacy pledgers, corporate partners and supporters, including those of you on our Supporter Panel.

Thank you!



Chris Burghes Chief Executive



On average we have

2,280*
volunteers

working with us each
month. A massive
thank you to them all.



All figures quoted are 2022,
unless stated otherwise.



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Key activities in 2022:

Caring in times of conflict

Blue Cross has a long history of caring for animals in times of conflict.

In 1912, the Blue Cross Fund was set up to assist animals during the Balkan Wars. And, in February 2022, we launched the Blue Cross Ukraine Pet Welfare Fund to support those affected by the war in Ukraine. Our urgent appeal raised over £295,000* providing vital support for people and pets fleeing Ukraine, as well as feeding and rescuing animals left behind because their families were not able to take them with them.

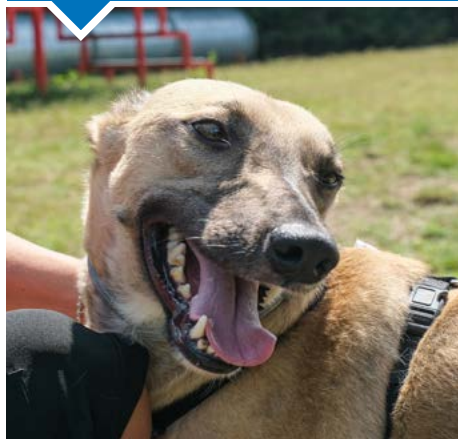
We have supported the efforts of partner charities in Ukraine, such as Save the Dogs, TOZ and TAC.social as they care for stray dogs, give pets veterinary treatment and reunite pets and people who have been separated. In addition, our Blue Cross Hertfordshire centre became an official quarantine centre for pets entering the UK from Ukraine with their owners.

During 2022, we provided:

- 400 tons of food to dogs and cats
- 90 dog houses
- 100's of dog jackets and blankets
- 1000 flea and worm treatments
- Medical supplies, leads and collars
- A vehicle to transport emergency supplies

Giorgio

Giorgio is one of 30 dogs rescued from the bombed city of Odessa in March 2022 and taken to Save the Dogs in Cernavoda, Romania. He cowers at the sound of any loud noise and he's also afraid of vehicle sounds, but the caring team at Save the Dogs have patiently been helping Giorgio to overcome his fears.



We provided sufficient food to feed

2,643
dogs & cats

left in Ukraine for nine months

We worked with the Ukraine Equestrian Federation and helped fund food and running costs for a shelter housing

40 horses

left in Ukraine

Responding in a crisis

With the help of our amazing supporters, we have always been here for pets and people in times of crisis.

When Canvey Island experienced devastating flooding in 1953, we responded with food for pets and emergency shelter for displaced pets. In 2022, as the cost of living crisis impacted families across the UK, we accelerated the expansion of our pet food banks to support people struggling to feed their pets.

As well as collecting and distributing pet food through our rehoming centres and shops, we launched an exciting partnership with Pets at Home, with the aim of having Blue Cross pet food collection points in 450 stores around the UK. The pet food bank service has gone from strength to strength in the early part of 2023.

By the end of 2022, we had:

- 28* Blue Cross sites where people could donate goods
- 11 Pets at Home stores where people could donate goods
- 5 Blue Cross sites where people could pick up pet food
- 77* local food banks being supplied with pet food
- 168 pallets of bulk pet food donated and distributed

In 2022, we provided food for

838,802*

pets to be fed for one day

"[My dog Oliver is] my best mate, he goes everywhere with me. [The pet food bank has made] a hell of a lot of difference because it's gone up colossal hasn't it. I don't know what I would have done. It's been a godsend."

Blue Cross donation sites

Help food banks to help pet owners



Large pallet donations

Help food banks to help pet owners



Blue Cross pet food banks

Help pet owners



Pets at Home sites

Help food banks to help pet owners



Campaigning on welfare issues

As well as supporting pets and people, we have always spoken out on pet welfare issues and campaigned vigorously to change government legislation and improve animal welfare standards in the UK.

In 2022, in partnership with Dogs Trust and the RSPCA, we launched our Cut The Chase campaign, calling for a ban on greyhound racing in the UK within the next five years. Taking action was a last resort after many years of raising concerns with the greyhound racing industry about the welfare of greyhounds involved in racing.

Every year, thousands of racing greyhounds face a life of uncertainty, injury and even death in the name of sport, fun and profit. That's why we are committed to stopping their suffering.

In Wales, this seems entirely possible with its one remaining track, the Valley Greyhound Stadium. Following a petition calling for a ban on greyhound racing in Wales attracting more than 35,000 signatures, the Senedd's petitions committee has recommended that the practice should come to an end in the country.

For more information on how you can support the campaign across the UK please visit bluecross.org.uk/campaign/CutTheChase.

From rescued racer to miracle pet

When Amy, a young woman living with multiple sclerosis (MS) was told a dog could improve her mental health, she had no idea how much. "She's given me a reason to smile every day," says Amy. As well as transforming Amy's mental health, the ex-racer miraculously knows when her owner is on the cusp of an MS attack – before she knows it herself.

"She is my world, 100 per cent my world."

Amy



On British licensed tracks, over 2,000 greyhounds died and nearly 18,000 injuries were recorded between 2018 and 2021.

Learning more about pets and people

In 2022, we asked UK pet lovers to take part in our Big Pet Census. Nearly 100,000 people took part, giving us a better understanding of the UK's pet population and raising awareness of our work. This insight will help to shape our future strategy as part of our ongoing commitment to providing services that effectively meet the needs of pets and people. Our census also beat hundreds of other organisations to receive the prestigious Data and Marketing Association Gold Customer Acquisition Award for bringing in thousands of new supporters and engaging them with our charity's work.

We have also been working with the University of Edinburgh on research into the challenges of pet ownership for owners on a low income. We surveyed 500 pet owners across the UK and carried out interviews to help us understand the challenges they face and how we can better support them.

95% of people see their pet as part of the family



Happy retirement Cookie

When Cookie arrived in our care, the 16-year-old seemed downhearted.

We suspected that she was in a bit of pain due to dental issues, and her spirits soon lifted once she'd had some teeth removed and a good scale and polish.

Our Bromsgrove rehoming centre then set about finding Cookie, who's now 17, the retirement home she deserved. And after almost two months in Blue Cross care, she's putting her paws up alongside a loving new family.

A year of changing lives

10

**Pet Advertising
Advisory Groups**
running across Europe
with support of
Blue Cross



1,731

**behaviour
interventions
and helpline calls**

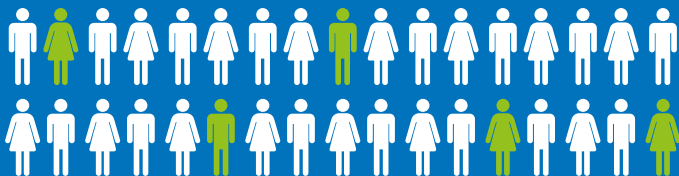


365

**pets helped
by the
Emergency
Care Fund**

254,967*

hours of volunteer time



49,365

**people reached
through education**



21,207

pets treated in our hospitals



831

horse welfare
consultations



4,003

pets helped by our
rehoming services



17,362

calls/emails answered and
WebChat conversations by our
Pet Bereavement Support



4 million

visits to our pet
advice pages



1,399

pets given
short-term
foster care

28,207

pets helped by Blue Cross



Rehoming

2022 proved to be another challenging year for our rehoming and fostering teams. Increased demand for our help was fuelled by the huge rise in the pet population, which rocketed by 19 per cent in 2021 due to the pandemic. Sadly, the cost of living crisis has compounded the issues facing people and pets, and rehoming centres have seen an increase in people relinquishing their pets for financial reasons.

Keeping pets and people together

Above all, our aim is to keep pets and people together and only rehome when it's absolutely necessary. The expert advice, practical help and behaviour support provided by our teams help people to overcome the issues they are facing with their pets – and can prevent the need for rehoming.

Remote services

Our foster and Home Direct schemes continued to be an effective and efficient way to rehome pets during

1,399 pets spent time in foster care
(1,590 in 2021)

764 pets helped by Home Direct
(642 in 2021)

4,003 pets helped by our rehoming services
(3,792 in 2021)

2022. Using these remote services prevents pets from having to spend time in kennels or catteries, reducing stress on them and relieving pressure on our rehoming centres. It also reduces costs.

Centralising pet admissions

To help more pets and people, we further streamlined our national rehoming service in 2022, by introducing a centralised admission call handling team.

Salt and Pepper

Originally found abandoned in a cardboard box in a park, Salt and Pepper finally found a loving new home after 390 days in our care. The two friends were initially very nervous, but thanks to some one-on-one care from a lovely fosterer, they grew in confidence. Sadly, it took a little longer to find the perfect home for Salt and Pepper, but eventually our rehoming team's perseverance paid off.

Pet Bereavement Support Service

Our Pet Bereavement Support Service (PBSS) went from strength to strength in 2022, providing compassionate support to people who had lost or had to give up a much loved pet.

We have seen an increase in both telephone calls and emails and having introduced WebChat in 2021, this method of contact has grown in popularity. We have increased the number of volunteers who deliver the service by 61 per cent and have also increased the number of Facebook users by 43* per cent.

We are focused on expanding our PBSS service, with the aim of raising awareness of this important service and supporting more people affected by pet loss.

9,187 telephone calls answered
(8,796 in 2021)

2,890 WebChat conversations
(809 in 2021)



Behaviour services

In 2022, the Behaviour Team continued to offer support to people struggling with their pets' behaviour, often keeping pets and people together and avoiding the need for rehoming.

A challenging year

Lockdown restrictions enforced during the pandemic have created a generation of pets, dogs in particular, that have struggled to cope with daily life after missing out on essential socialisation and training from an early age. As a result, our Behaviour Team saw an unprecedented number of complex cases in 2022.

New paid-for service

After receiving numerous donations from grateful pet owners who had benefitted from consultations with our Behaviour Team during the pandemic, we knew that our animal behaviour expertise had the potential to help more pets and people and provide an additional income stream for the charity. During 2022, we launched a 12-month pilot of

this service, offering online advice sessions to pet owners across the UK. After receiving wonderful feedback we plan to market this service nationally and review it in early summer.



1,731

behaviour consultations
(692 in 2021)

Veterinary services

In 2022, the veterinary sector in the UK experienced national workforce shortages, stock and supply issues and rising costs. At the same time, demand for veterinary services increased due to the growth in the pet population. In spite of these challenges, our hospitals continued to provide 24/7 animal care thanks to the support of animal lovers around the UK.

Our veterinary professionals adapted to Covid-19 by utilising telephone and video consultations which continued throughout 2022. In 2023, we plan to expand our remote consulting capacity to support more people and pets.

61,614

hospital consultations
(66,456 in 2021)

Due to the pressures of rising demand and workforce challenges, it has been necessary to concentrate on pets with the greatest need, and cut back on more routine treatments such as neutering and vaccinations. As a result, hospital consultation numbers were marginally lower than in the previous year.

Greater efficiency

To improve efficiency in our hospitals, we introduced new technology in 2022 which marked a significant step towards the automation of purchasing medical supplies and stock control. Streamlining this system allows our hospital teams to spend less time on admin, and more time helping the people and pets who need them.



Improved knowledge and understanding



As we emerged from the impact of Covid-19, our education teams adapted quickly to the changing environment. We were able to improve knowledge and understanding of animal welfare by reintroducing face-to-face sessions in schools, and this was complemented by the new ways of working we had introduced in 2020, such as online talks, workshops and super sessions.

Online live super sessions

Following a successful pilot in 2021, we ran more online live super sessions in 2022. These sessions proved a highly effective and cost-efficient way to connect with hundreds of children at a time, reaching 7,828* children during 2022.

Training child foster carers and agencies

Following discussions with social workers, foster carers and agencies, we developed sessions for adults to support and encourage positive relationships between fostered children and pets already in the home.

Responsible Dog Ownership Course

These courses give guidance to those who have been referred to us by police forces as a result of committing a dog-related offence. Having started this initiative with the West Midlands Police, we began receiving referrals from South Yorkshire Police in 2022 and discussions are underway with a further nine forces.

16,752
virtual interactions
(24,248 in 2021)

27,511
people reached in
person (3,528 in 2021)

Our plans for the future

In 2023, we will be pushing ahead with plans which will allow us to increase the number of pets and people helped. But we can't achieve any of these goals without your support.

Roll out of pet food banks nationwide

During 2023, we will work closely with charity and commercial partners to expand our network of pet food banks around the UK. The cost of living crisis has created unprecedented pressure on household budgets, so services like our pet food banks have never been needed more.

A new approach to rehoming

In 2023, we will start to roll out our new approach to the rehoming of pets nationwide. Rehoming has changed greatly during recent years and we have been working hard to develop an approach that allows us to work more efficiently – and help more pets and people.

Developing our veterinary services

Insight gained from research in 2022 has given us a better understanding of the people who need us most. This will inform how we adapt our

services and influence the design of future veterinary services.

New systems and technology

With your support, we plan to invest in new systems and technology that will allow us to operate more efficiently, improve customer experience and maximise our impact on pets and people in need.



Your support is vital

As the cost of living crisis continues, we expect demand for our services to increase. At the same time, with household budgets being squeezed by rising prices, it's becoming harder and harder to raise the vital funds we need. Your continuing support will be more crucial than ever to help us through the challenging times ahead.

Pilgrim's progress

Pilgrim's life changed forever after one of the most heartless and brutal attacks our teams have ever witnessed. CCTV caught the moment that two figures poured flammable liquid over Pilgrim and set him alight. His face, ear, neck, flank and hind quarters all suffered horrific burns, but so far no one has been charged in connection with the attack.

Two years on, after a period of rehabilitation at Blue Cross Burford, Pilgrim is making great progress in a loving new home.



For every £1 invested in fundraising we received

£6.66*

(£5.36 in 2021)



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Thank you

As a charity that receives no government funding (with the unusual exception of the coronavirus government grants), we are very grateful for your vital support. Whether you donate, volunteer, raise money in the workplace or have pledged a gift in your Will – you make an incredible difference.

Together we change the lives of thousands of pets and the people who love them.

Thank you!

If you would like further information about our work, please call our Supporter Care Team on:

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bluecross.org.uk

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