

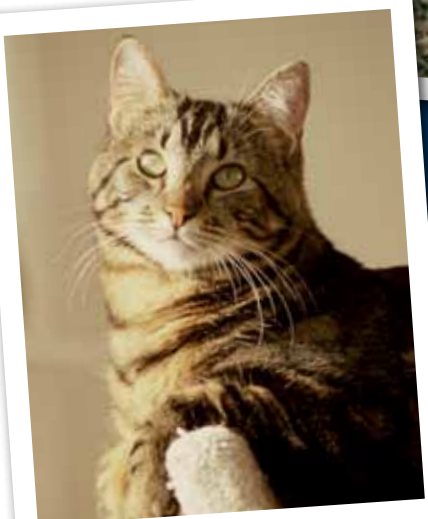
When you are living with domestic abuse, it can be even harder to decide to leave if you have a much-loved family pet. Most refuges are unable to take in your pet, but please don't worry – there is help available.

We want to help you... and your pet

The RSPCA's PetRetreat service may be able to arrange for foster carers to look after your pets if you are fleeing domestic abuse. Your pet will be given a good home until you are settled and can look after it again – this usually takes between four and six months, but may take longer.

PetRetreat is not just for dogs and cats – any other small animal can be taken in. If necessary your pet will be neutered, microchipped, vaccinated and given flea and worming treatment. And we will provide veterinary treatment if your pet needs it.

All contact with us is completely confidential. We make sure that we find the safest way to keep in touch and your welfare is our priority – see the Confidentiality section on the right for more information.



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The next step...

- If you feel that you are ready to leave your home – or are in a refuge and have had to leave your pets behind – please contact us by calling: 0300 123 8278 or 07715 540182 or emailing: petretreat@rspca.org.uk
- We will ask you to fill in a questionnaire about your pet. This helps us to find the best home for each animal, so you need to give us as much detail as possible.
- You will need to confirm your identity when we meet, so try to bring your driving licence or passport, or another form of identification.



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- You will be met in a safe place at an agreed location, away from your home town.
- If you have had to leave your pet behind, please ask your support worker to help you arrange for a police escort to accompany you to your home so you can collect your pets and possessions.
- Before going to a foster carer your pet will receive a health check and behavioural assessment – this helps us find the best foster home.

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Is fostering the right thing to do?

Only cats and dogs that are over six months old can be fostered – this is because it is unsettling for young animals to be moved in and out of foster care. For the same reason, only established family pets are fostered.

So, for young or new pets (and others – for example, it sometimes isn't possible to find alternative housing that allows pets), it may be best to consider putting them up for rehoming. Although this

can be hard, it may be best for both your pet and your family. One of the RSPCA's animal centres will try to find your pet a loving new home.

Confidentiality

Please be reassured that no one will be able to trace you through your pets. The people who foster your pets will not know who you are or where you are, and animals will not be fostered in the area where the abuse occurred.

To keep you and your pet safe, you won't be able to visit your pet while it is being fostered, although PetRetreat will let you know how your pet is getting on.

To avoid carrying this leaflet with you, press out this card, which has contact details for both the RSPCA PetRetreat service and the National Domestic Violence Helpline.

PetRetreat:

0300 123 8278 or 07715 540182

National domestic violence helpline:

0808 2000 247

"I suffered domestic abuse from my husband for 24 years. When I took the decision to leave I felt really anxious about what would happen to my beloved dogs,

Ella and Grace, as most women's refuges can't take pets.

"But one refuge told me that the RSPCA could arrange temporary foster care of my dogs. I couldn't get over it – this was the answer to my prayers. I gave them a ring straight away and they said that they could and would help me and I've not looked back since.

"I'm not saying it wasn't hard as I really missed them, but I knew in my heart that they would be well looked after. I kept in touch every day by phone or text.

"All the people from PetRetreat and the women's refuge made it so much easier for me to get away from the hell that was my life. I can now get back my self respect and pride. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Gill*, pet owner

Happily, Gill is now reunited with Ella and Grace.

**Names have been changed to protect the individuals concerned.*



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For advice or to find out more about the RSPCA'S PetRetreat service, please either:

call: 0300 123 8278

email: petretreat@rspca.org.uk

visit: www.rspca-petretreat.com

If you are suffering abuse or violence in the home, contact the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline:

call: 0808 2000 247

visit: www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Push here.

PetRetreat

Find your nearest pet fostering service

PetRetreat doesn't yet cover all England and Wales, but other schemes are available – check out the list below to find a scheme where you live.

RSPCA PetRetreat: 0300 123 8278 or 07715 540182

Avon; Berkshire; Cornwall; Cumbria; Devon; Dorset; Gloucestershire; Hampshire; Herefordshire; Isle of Wight; Leicestershire; Rutland; Shropshire; Somerset; south Lincolnshire; Staffordshire; Surrey; Wales; West Midlands; Wiltshire; Worcestershire; the north of England.

Dogs Trust Freedom Project: 0800 298 9199

Greater London; Hertfordshire.

Dogs Trust Freedom Project: 0800 083 4322

Yorkshire.

Paws for Kids: 01204 394 482

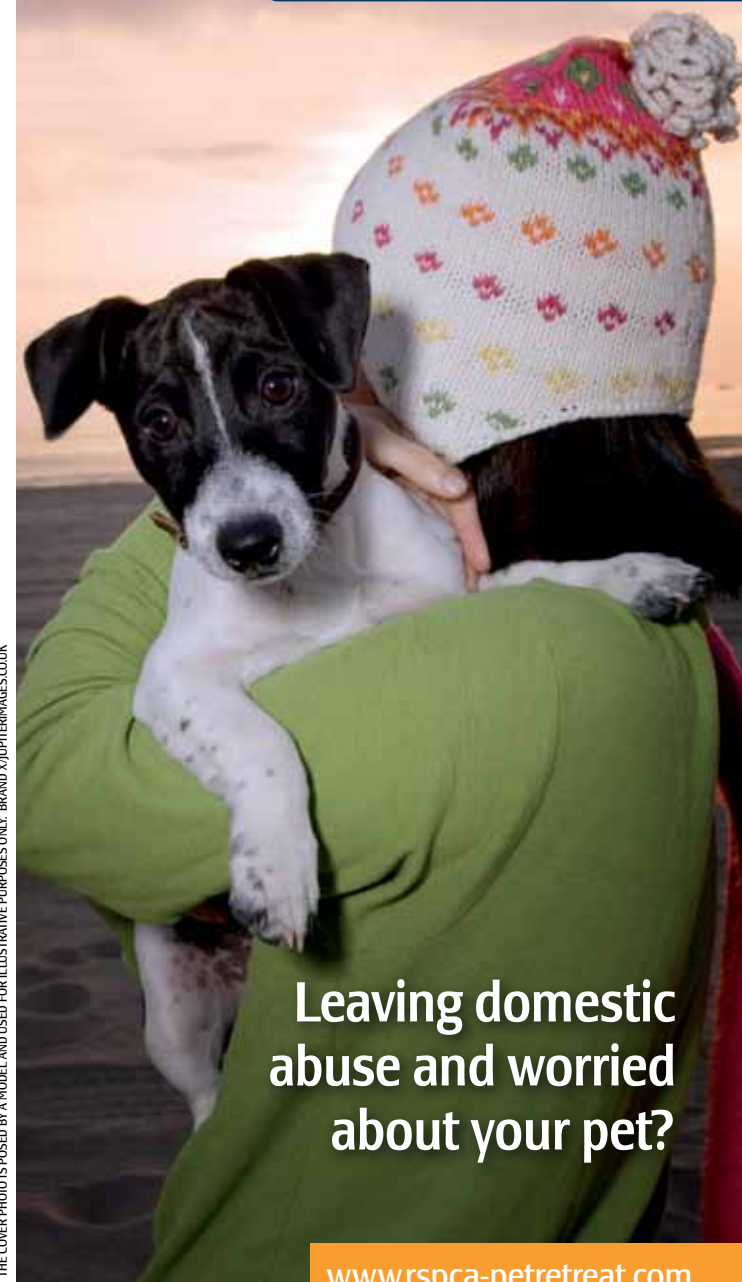
Cumbria; Lancashire; Greater Manchester; Merseyside; north Cheshire.



RSPCA



PetRetreat



Leaving domestic abuse and worried about your pet?

www.rspca-petretreat.com



RSPCA, PO Box 837, Taunton, Somerset TA1 9FG. Tel: 0300 123 8278
The RSPCA only exists because of public donations. The RSPCA helps animals in England and Wales. Charity registration no. 219099.

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