

Dogs Trust Freedom Project

Dogs Trust Freedom Project provides temporary foster care for dogs belonging to women fleeing domestic violence in **Greater London** and **Yorkshire**. Volunteer foster carers will care for your dog in their own home until you are in a position to be reunited. The service is provided free of charge and costs such as pet food and veterinary treatment will be covered by Dogs Trust. We can also arrange for Cats Protection to care for your cat (Greater London only) for a maximum of six months.

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is physical, emotional, psychological or sexual violence, experienced by people in a domestic relationship. This can range from slaps, kicks, punches, shaking and wounding, to murder. It can include making someone perform and/or receive unwanted sexual acts to rape. It may also include; harassment, threats of violence and intimidating or humiliating behaviour, making someone feel stupid, verbal abuse, destroying property, threatening or actual harm to family pets, and making someone afraid by using looks, actions or gestures.

Domestic Violence and Cruelty to Pets

Research shows there is a link between domestic violence and animal abuse. Pets are often used by the abuser as a tool to control, threaten, intimidate and frighten the victim by threatening to harm, harming or actually killing a beloved pet. As a result many women often remain in a violent situation as they fear their partner will deliberately harm their pet if they leave.

Getting Help

If you are suffering violence in the home, phone the 24hr National Domestic Violence Helpline on **0808 2000 247**.

How to Access Our Pet Fostering Service

Dogs Trust Freedom Project Greater London on:

Tel: 0800 298 9199

Fax: 020 7833 2830

Dogs Trust Freedom Project Yorkshire on:

Tel: 0800 083 4322

Fax: 0113 2814932

email: freedomproject@dogstrust.org.uk

www.dogstrustfreedomproject.org.uk

What We Will Need You to Do

- 1 Provide confirmation that you are fleeing domestic violence from a support group/agency that is advising you e.g. Women's Aid, Refuge, a Solicitor, the Police or Social Services.
- 1 Fill out a questionnaire about your dog with as much information as possible.
- 1 Sign our legal agreement before we place your dog with a foster carer.
- 1 If you are able to plan for your pet's departure, try to have things such as their collar and lead, bedding, food bowls, favourite toys and any medication in a safe place out of your partner's reach, ready for when you leave.



Photo: Andy Catterall

What Happens Next?

- 1 Using the details you have provided we will match your dog to a suitable foster carer. We always try to find someone as soon as possible. However, if possible you should leave your pet with a family member/friend until we can arrange a placement.
- 1 If you have to go into a refuge/emergency housing quickly and leave your pets behind be sure to ask for a police escort to accompany you to your home to collect your pets and possessions. The refuge workers can advise you on this.
- 1 Dogs Trust will pick up your pet from a safe location in the Greater London or Yorkshire area and take them directly to their new foster home. We usually require three working days notice to arrange a placement.



Photo: Andy Catterall

Confidentiality

We understand it is very important you cannot be traced through your pets. The carers who foster your dog will not be given any of your contact details. Dogs will not be fostered in the area they are from and to maintain safety you will not be able to visit your pet but we will make sure they are well looked

after and we will send you regular photos and updates.

Veterinary Care

All foster dogs are registered with a veterinary practice local to their carer and all veterinary costs will be covered by Dogs Trust. Your dog will visit a vet within the first few days for:

- 1 A health check-up
- 1 Vaccination - unless an up to date certificate is provided
- 1 Microchipping - your dog will be chipped and registered to Dogs Trust until completion of the placement
- 1 Preventative flea and worming treatment
- 1 Neutering - all dogs will be neutered unless this procedure has been carried out previously

Reclaiming Your Dog

We will foster your dog temporarily and you can reclaim him at any time, giving us at least 3 days notice. However, we would expect the maximum foster period to be no longer than 6 to 12 months and during this time you will be expected to keep us updated on your housing situation on a regular basis. We will only return your dog to a safe location in the Greater London or Yorkshire area.

Permanent Rehoming for Your Pets

You may not find alternative housing that allows pets or you may decide it is in your pets' best interests to rehome them permanently. We can arrange this for your dog through one of our Rehoming Centres and Cats Protection will do the same for your cat.

Listed below are other pet fostering services for women fleeing domestic violence that operate outside of the Greater London and Yorkshire area:-

Paws for Kids

T: 01204 698999

E: info@pawsforkids.org.uk

www.pawsforkids.org.uk

Covers Lancashire, Greater Manchester, North Cheshire & Merseyside

RSPCA Pet Retreat - West Regional HQ

T: 07715 540182

Covers Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Avon, Dorset, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Surrey, Isle of Wight, Wales and West

Pet Retreat

T: 07910 721797

Covers Leicestershire, Rutland and Sth Lincolnshire

Wood Green Animal Shelter

T: 08701 904090

Covers Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire

Buster Foundation

T: 07722 361825

Covers North Wales

Pet Fostering Service Scotland

T: 01877 331496

www.pfss.org.uk

Covers Scotland



DOGS TRUST FREEDOM PROJECT

PET FOSTERING SERVICE FOR WOMEN FLEEING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Photo: Andy Catterall

Dogs Trust is committed to Equal Opportunities in all aspects of its work.



Dogs Trust is working towards the day when all dogs can enjoy a happy life, free from the threat of unnecessary destruction.

Registered Charity No. 227523

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