Key findings

This year’s PDSA Animal Wellbeing (PAW) Report has once again been structured around owners’ knowledge and application of the Animal Welfare Acts and the 5 Welfare Needs that are enshrined within them. While there are improvements to celebrate since our first report in 2011, there is still much work to be done.

The findings of the PAW Report continue to provide valuable insights into the wellbeing of our nation’s pets. We hope it will continue to provide a focus for campaigning, appropriate intervention and educational initiatives across the animal welfare sector in order to help improve pet wellbeing and give our nation’s pets the great lives they deserve.

We surveyed …

2080 dog owners
2076 cat owners
483 rabbit owners

The 5 Welfare Needs are at the heart of what we do

Health
Environment
Diet
Companion

This summary provides an overview of our key findings from our 2018 survey of pet owners in partnership with YouGov.

You can download the full PAW Report, including the results of our professional survey and BVA and BVNA’s Voice of the Profession surveys, from our website pdsa.org.uk/pawreport

1.4 million dogs (16%) are walked less than once a day, and 89,000 are never walked at all (1%)

2.1 million dogs (24%) are left alone for five or more hours on a typical weekday

40% of dog owners don’t know their pet’s current weight and / or body condition score

91% of dogs are microchipped

1.1 million dogs (12%) have received no training in any way

90% of dogs are currently registered with a vet

65% of cat owners don’t know their pet’s current weight and/or body condition score

77% of cat owners would like to change one or more of their cat’s behaviours

53% of cat owners matched images of Body Condition Score 4 (overweight) or 5 (obese) to their cat’s current body shape

81% of cats are currently registered with a vet

89% of cat owners report that their cat is afraid of at least one thing

4.8 million cats (43%) live in multi-cat households

We surveyed …

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28% of rabbits live in a hutch or cage that is too small

54% of rabbit owners want to change one or more of their rabbit’s behaviours

20% of rabbits (200,000) are fed muesli as part of their main diet

540,000 rabbits (54%) live alone

77% of rabbit owners don’t know their pet’s current weight and / or body condition score

13% of rabbit owners have provided no preventive healthcare for their rabbit
Help us improve pet wellbeing

Every year the PAW Report gives us essential insights into pet wellbeing in the UK. We’re incredibly proud that over the last eight years, these findings have helped form the basis of campaigns and collaborative initiatives across the animal welfare sector and veterinary profession.

On a local level, veterinary practices across the UK are able to use the findings to shape clinics and encourage behaviour change in owners to benefit their pet’s wellbeing.

We’d love for the findings of this year’s Report to again be used by the sector to continue to stimulate change – to enable us all to acknowledge the most pressing issues and tackle them head on. This will ensure continued momentum in the drive to improve the welfare of pets across the UK. Only through hard work and collaboration can we tackle these issues in order to see improvements in key areas such as obesity, loneliness, behavioural issues, pre-purchase decision making and more in future PAW Reports.

Saving pets is what we do. Every. Single. Day.

Your support today will save pets’ lives tomorrow.

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Find out how you can help at pdsa.org.uk