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PPM **Pet Product Marketing**

Supporting independent pet retailers

August 2026

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

SMALL PETS GO PREMIUM

How natural products and enrichment are creating new opportunities for retailers

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**enquiries@rosewoodpet.com
www.rosewoodpet.com**

This month's issue of PPM is dedicated to some of the smaller members of the pet world.

We begin with puppies, with not only the usual inspiration for great stock ideas, but also an acknowledgement of the vital role pet retailers play in helping to prevent behavioural issues and reassuring owners with answers to those all-important first-time questions.

How well does your store cater for rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters and other small furries? As the UK's third-largest pet category, there is still plenty of opportunity to capture a greater share of the basket spend generated by the millions of small pet owners.

Are you keeping up with the latest trends? You may have read that lick mats are having a moment. Online search interest has increased as owners look for simple ways to enrich their dogs' lives through mental stimulation.

On page 34, we provide stock suggestions to support this growing interest, along with further products that complement a lick mat purchase.

PATS 2026 is fast approaching and, this year, The Grooming Zone is not only returning but expanding, too. Turn to page 23 to discover how the programme has been designed to deliver valuable insight for both professional groomers and pet retailers.

And finally, on page 40, we highlight some ideal products and solutions to help pets cope with bonfire night... arguably the most anxious night of the year for many of them.

Nathaniel



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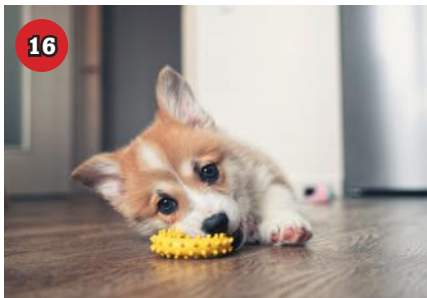
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PIF launches GARD to support responsible marketing

GARD (Guidance for Advertising, Review and Drafting) is a tool designed to help businesses assess the advertising risk of pet supplements and other non-medicinal veterinary products.

The app is intended to support responsible marketing by helping users identify wording that may risk presenting a product as a veterinary medicine.

GARD is aimed at manufacturers, brand owners, marketers, technical teams and regulatory reviewers involved in developing packaging, leaflets, websites, testimonials and other promotional materials for non-medicinal veterinary products in the pet sector.

The framework has been developed against the current regulatory backdrop, including Veterinary Medicines Directorate guidance on advertising non-medicinal veterinary products, a document published on 14 January 2026.

Nigel Baker, PIF CEO, said, "GARD has been developed to help businesses navigate an area that can often feel unclear in practice. By giving companies a more structured way to review wording and presentation, we hope it will support better decision-making and encourage high standards in the marketing of non-medicinal veterinary products across the pet sector."

The PetFellas partners with Himalayan Pet Supply

USA-based company, Himalayan Pet Supply, is best known for being behind some of the world's best-known dog chews. The partnership will see The PetFellas exclusively introduce and distribute a selection of Himalayan Pet Supply products in the UK, including the reintroduction of the Yogurt Sticks range.

Gerard O'Mahony, Commercial Director at The PetFellas, commented, "We are absolutely delighted to be partnering with Himalayan Pet Supply. Their commitment to quality is evident across every part of the business – from their product development to the strength of their team and the breadth of their range."

The initial product launch is expected to roll out across the UK in the coming months, with strong support from both businesses to drive awareness and in-store success.



Breeder's Choice named Cat Litter of the Year

Breeder's Choice Paper Cat Litter has been named Cat Litter of the Year at the 2026 Pet Product Marketing (PPM) Retailer Recommended Awards.

The award, voted for by pet retailers, recognises products

that perform well in-store and deliver consistent results for both retailers and consumers.

The brand says the move from Breeder Select to Breeder's Choice has been carefully managed to minimise disruption for retailers, with familiar packaging helping shoppers recognise the product on shelf while maintaining continuity of supply.





PATS brings a revamped Grooming Zone to 2026

It's back with an expanded programme designed to offer valuable insight for both professional groomers and pet retailers



Taking place at the NEC Birmingham from 27-29 September, 2026, the UK's premier pet and aquatics trade show continues to develop its popular show features, with this year's Grooming Zone

introducing new retailer-focused sessions alongside the return of live grooming demonstrations.

Delivered in partnership with BIGA (British Isles Grooming Association), The Grooming Zone will showcase expert-led demonstrations highlighting professional grooming techniques, best practice and practical skills, making it an essential destination for groomers looking to enhance their knowledge.

New for 2026, retailers will also benefit from dedicated sessions focused on growing their grooming category. Experts will share

advice on recommending coat and skin care products with confidence, helping customers choose the right solutions for their pets while also recognising when it is appropriate to refer them to a professional groomer.

Whether you're a groomer looking to refine your skills or a retailer keen to expand your grooming offering, The Grooming Zone provides practical advice and industry expertise that can be applied straight away.

Free to attend for qualifying trade professionals, The Grooming Zone is just one of the many attractions at PATS 2026, which takes place alongside BETA International at the NEC Birmingham.



Register now to secure your free trade ticket



Zoomark and Petzoo Eurasia announce exhibition in Turkey

Following a strategic partnership announced in 2025, Zoomark BolognaFiere Cosmoprof S.P.A and Petzoo Eurasia Ulusal Fuarcilik have revealed plans to launch a new pet exhibition in Turkey from 2028.

The new event forms part of BolognaFiere Group's long-term international growth strategy and will be developed in partnership with Ulusal Fuarcilik, one of Turkey's leading pet industry exhibition organisers.

Ahead of the launch, Zoomark will support Petzoo Eurasia's international marketing and sales activities for the 2026 and 2027 editions, helping to expand the exhibition's global reach and strengthen business opportunities for exhibitors, buyers and industry professionals in one of the world's fastest-growing pet markets.



6

The R'Awards launch for 2027

The Natural Dog Expo has announced the first Raw & Fresh Awards, a new awards programme for the raw and fresh pet food sector.

The inaugural event will take place on 1 May 2027 at the St John's Hotel in Solihull, recognising innovation, excellence and leadership across the growing natural pet nutrition market.

Award categories will celebrate achievements across manufacturing, retail and product development, including Raw Retailer of the Year, Raw Brand of the Year, Fresh Lightly Cooked Brand and an Industry Lifetime Achievement Award.

Nominations will open in September, with entries judged by a panel including Daniel Everett of the Pet Industry Federation, pet industry podcaster, Clayton Payne, and Dr Vicki Adams, Chief Executive of the Animal Cancer Trust.

Organisers say the awards aim to celebrate the businesses and individuals helping to shape the future of raw and fresh pet nutrition, with the ceremony bringing together professionals from across the sector for an evening of networking and recognition.

Nylabone donation supports Medical Detection Dogs

Nylabone has donated a selection of its durable chew toys to Medical Detection Dogs to support the charity's work training dogs for life-changing assistance and medical detection roles.

The donation will benefit dogs at every stage of training from young puppies beginning their journey through to older dogs who are developing the specialist scent detection skills that enable them to support people living with complex medical conditions and assist in medical research.



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For all the latest news and new products, head to [petproductmarketing.co.uk](https://www.petproductmarketing.co.uk)

Guinea Pig Welfare Forum returns

The UK's only event dedicated to guinea pig welfare will return on 22 September, as the Guinea Pig Welfare Forum 2026 brings together veterinary professionals, rescues, welfare organisations and researchers for a full day of expert-led discussion and collaboration. Co-hosted by Burgess Excel and the charity Guinea Pig Welfare UK, the forum will take place at the Crowne Plaza in Birmingham.

Now in its third year, the one-day event will feature a diverse speaker line-up spanning veterinary medicine, research, education and welfare. Confirmed speakers include Mary Coles, University of Liverpool, Alison Wills, Hartpury University and clinicians and nurses working at the forefront of small animal practice, as well as John Chitty, RCVS Advanced Practitioner in Zoological Medicine, who will be chairing the event.

John Chitty, Chair of Guinea Pig Welfare UK said, "Last year's Guinea Pig Welfare Forum marked an important milestone with the launch of Guinea Pig Welfare UK, creating a dedicated voice focused on improving standards of care, education and advocacy for guinea pigs nationwide."



Burgess Pet Care acquires Bunny Nature

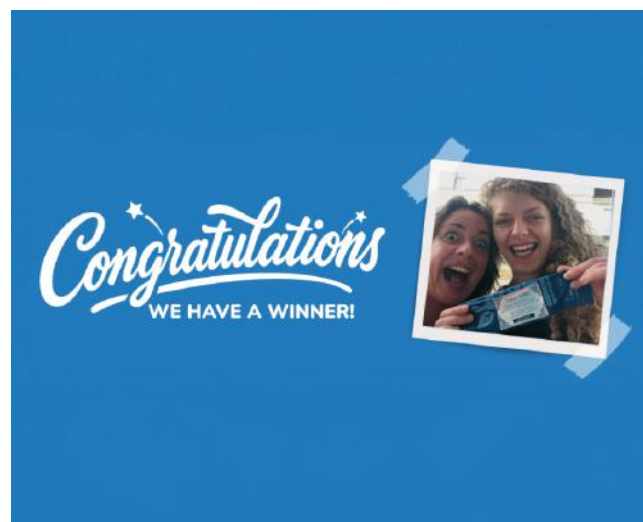
The acquisition of the German company will see five-fold increase in Burgess Pet Care's international revenues.

The move, completed through an asset purchase process, will see the group increase its international revenues to £12.5m, and represents Burgess' largest international deal to date.

Bunny Nature is known for its high-quality small animal feeds, with established distribution spanning the EU, North America and Asia. Its international footprint provides Burgess with immediate access to a broader customer base and supports its ongoing strategy to scale its presence worldwide.

Burgess will maintain Bunny Nature as a distinct brand within the group. Existing senior leadership teams will remain in place, providing continuity and a seamless service for its customers, partners and employees.

Mark Womersley, Managing Director of Burgess Pet Care, said, "This is a significant milestone for Burgess. Bunny Nature is a highly respected brand with genuine international reach, and its values, expertise, and reputation align perfectly with our long-term ambition to create the world's leading small animal brand."



DIRTBAG celebrates first winning ticket

The winning silver ticket was found by Dani and her dog Marvo who purchased the pack from retailer Koola Dogz, taking home a £250 cash prize.

As part of the promotion, random packs of DIRTBAG Compostable Poo Bags contain a winning ticket, giving lucky customers and retailers the chance to win a share of the prizes available.

"We're delighted to celebrate our very first winner," says the DIRTBAG team. "Dani and Marvo's win shows the excitement this promotion can create for dog owners, and we're thrilled that Fran and the team at Koola Dogz were the first retailer to be part of that moment."

Koola Dogz will also receive a £250 DIRTBAG voucher as part of the promotion, rewarding the retailer for selling the winning pack.

The search is far from over, with plenty more tickets still waiting to be found. Retailers stocking DIRTBAG can continue to encourage customers to check their packs and join the excitement.

Scrappy to the Rescue launches 22-product dog care range

Scrappy to the Rescue has officially launched its full premium natural dog care range, featuring 22 products, including 17 shampoos and five balms, designed to support dogs' coat condition, skin health, hygiene, and overall wellbeing.

Developed using natural ingredients, botanical extracts, and essential oils, the range focuses on creating effective yet gentle formulations suitable for regular grooming and everyday use.

The launch comes at a seasonal time when many dogs experience increased skin sensitivity, coat changes, and common environmental challenges, including dryness, irritation, and exposure to fleas and ticks.

Key products in the range include:

Itch Defence – a soothing shampoo with lavender, chamomile and rose geranium, plus oatmeal and aloe vera, designed to help calm dry, irritated and sensitive skin

Pup Shield – designed for flea and tick season, helping support coat cleanliness and comfort for itchy, irritated skin

Pure Pup – a gentle, fragrance-free shampoo created for puppies and dogs with sensitive skin

Dream Coat – a nourishing shampoo designed to support a soft, smooth and healthy-looking coat

Stink Be Gone! – a deodorising shampoo that helps refresh the coat and remove unwanted odours between washes

Alongside the shampoo range, Scrappy to the Rescue also offers a selection of nourishing balms designed to support paw and nose care, helping maintain comfort and hydration throughout the year.

The brand's mission extends beyond grooming, with a strong commitment to supporting animal rescue organisations. 20% of profits are donated to animal rescue efforts, helping support the care and rehoming of abandoned, neglected, and vulnerable animals.



To find out more, visit scrappytotherescue.com

Travall's new crash-tested dog crate

8

The new TÜV SÜD certified crash-tested dog crate is designed to provide dogs with safer and more secure journeys by car.

The crate has been independently tested at 50km/h with forces of up to 25 times the dog's bodyweight. To pass, the dog must remain safely inside, the door must stay closed, and the structure must remain intact, including testing in the scenario where rear seats are folded down.

Designed for comfort as well as protection, the crate features excellent airflow, a quiet construction to reduce distractions, and a durable, chew-resistant design. It is also portable and comes with a two-year guarantee.

Priced from £289.99, Travall's new crate offers dog owners a certified safety solution for travelling with their pets.

Lorenzo Barichella, founder of Training Dog, said, "Travelling safely isn't just about preventing injuries. It's about creating an environment where dogs can feel calm, secure and confident, allowing them to enjoy the journey as much as the destination."



To find out more, visit travall.co.uk

Encore Bone Broth Toppers



Encore has expanded its cat food range with the launch of its new Bone Broth Toppers in the UK.

The range features two protein-rich recipes: Chicken Bone Broth with Chicken Breast and Fish Bone Broth with Tuna Fillet. Made with 100% natural ingredients and real flakes of chicken or tuna, the toppers can be served over dry kibble to add moisture and flavour or enjoyed as a tasty treat.

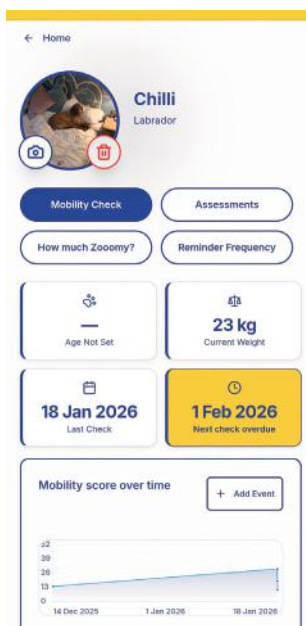
Each pouch features a resealable spout, keeping the contents fresh in the fridge for up to five days after opening. The range also includes a variety pack containing four pouches.

Robyn Long, Innovation Manager at Encore, said, "Cat owners are increasingly looking for ways to encourage their pets to consume more moisture, particularly those feeding dry kibble."

"Our Bone Broth Toppers provide a practical and delicious way to add moisture, while also enhancing meals with flavour, texture, high-quality protein and other essential nutrients."

To find out more, visit encorepetfood.com

Zoomy's app to help track joint health



The supplement manufacturer has launched the new app with a particular that focuses on supporting owners of ageing dogs.

The free web app allows owners to record changes in their dog's mobility over time, helping them identify potential issues and make informed decisions about exercise and care. No purchase is required to use the tool.

To find out more, visit zoomy.com

LitPet's Xelflex-powered Joint Care Powder

LitPet's new Joint Care Powder for cats and dogs is formulated to support joint health and mobility.

Xelflex contains a collagen peptide derived from milk protein. The ingredient is clinically studied and is intended to support joint health by helping to reduce inflammatory markers associated with mobility issues.

The formulation also includes:

- 300mg glucosamine, which supports cartilage health
- 200mg chondroitin, a compound commonly used in joint supplements to help maintain cartilage structure
- 200mg organic MSM (methylsulfonylmethane), included to support connective tissue health

The powder also contains 40mg of turmeric extract, which provides curcuminoids, alongside taurine and Yucca Schidigera, a plant with strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

The powder is formulated for both cats and dogs and contains no added fillers or artificial additives, according to the manufacturer.



For further information, visit litpet.co

Premium freeze-dried range from RAWR



RAWR has entered the UK market with a seven-product range of complete meals and single-ingredient treats designed specifically for modern dogs and cats. At the heart of the brand is a freeze-drying process which avoids high-heat cooking and heavy extrusion to preserve up to 97% of naturally occurring nutrients while locking in the real meat flavours pets are instinctively drawn to.

The RAWR formula supports healthier skin, a shinier coat, and increased vitality, while offering the convenience of a premium, travel-friendly resealable pouch with zero mess. Each recipe is made with 85% prime-cut meat, heart, and liver, with no grains, fillers, or questionable rendered meat meals. Addressing traditional concerns around raw feeding, RAWR incorporates human-grade, WHO-approved pathogen elimination technology, removing harmful bacteria without the use of heat and giving vets greater confidence in recommending the brand.

The range includes:

For dogs

- RAWR Gourmet Chicken with Superfoods
- RAWR Gourmet Chicken & Salmon with Superfoods
- RAWR Gourmet Beef with Superfoods

For cats

- RAWR Gourmet Chicken with Superfoods
- RAWR Gourmet Chicken & Salmon with Superfoods

Treats, toppers and supplements

- RAWR 100% Chicken Breast
- RAWR 100% Duck Breast



To find out more, visit rawrpet.com

The Furbulosa Bundle from Fabulosa

The home and lifestyle brand is making life with pets easier with the launch of its new limited-edition Furbulosa All-in-One Pet Bundle.

Inside the bundle, shoppers will find a 220ml Concentrated Disinfectant, 500ml Antibacterial Spray, 500ml Pet Urine Destroyer and 500ml Odour Neutraliser, all in the fruity Raspberry Nectar fragrance.

Sara Hassan, Head of Brand at Fabulosa, commented, "We adore our pets, but there's no denying they can sometimes leave behind a few unwanted surprises. That's why we've created our new Furbulosa All-in-One Pet Bundle, making it easy to stay on top of pet messes while filling homes with a fragrance that's simply perfect. We can't wait for shoppers to get their paws on it!"



To find out more, visit myfabulosa.co.uk

Freeze-Dried Toppers from Pooch & Mutt



Pooch & Mutt has expanded its Raw range with the launch of its first-ever freeze-dried products.

The new range includes two Freeze-Dried Treats and two Freeze-Dried Toppers, in meaty and fish flavours. The launch marks a new category entry for the brand, strengthening its position across

functional feeding, treating, and everyday pet wellbeing.

The new freeze-dried products sit within Pooch & Mutt's Raw range, created for adventurous appetites and instinct-led feeding. The range combines high-quality raw meat with carefully selected ingredients, with recipes frozen and then freeze-dried to help lock in goodness, flavour and nutrition.

Freeze-Dried Toppers are designed to be sprinkled over food or used as a high-value reward. They are available in Chicken and Turkey flavours and made from 96% lean proteins to help maintain lean muscle, support energy and overall health.

Paul Dennison, CEO of Pooch & Mutt, said, "Freeze-dried is an exciting new format for our Raw range because it brings together several things we know owners are looking for: high-quality protein, convenience, strong palatability and simple ways to add more functional value into their dog's day."

To find out more, visit poochandmutt.co.uk

The Paws Lab's new SilverTi+ technology



The Paws Lab launches two new products with SilverTi+ technology for travelling with your dogs this summer.

The company has added a new Dry Shampoo and Pet Wet Wipes to their range of healthcare, hygiene and grooming products. Both containing their exclusive SilverTi+ technology, they are perfect to take on holidays with you this summer for your pets.

The Paws Lab Dry shampoo is designed for travelling with your dog as it provides a quick, waterless clean-up after muddy walks, eliminates "wet-dog" odours, and fits easily into your luggage.

Powered by SilverTi+ (nano silver blended with titanium dioxide), this ingredient soothes and protects your pet's coat, ensuring that their fur remains fresh, clean, and free from irritants while supporting overall skin health.

Pet Wet Wipes make travelling with your dog or cat significantly easier by allowing you to quickly clean dirty paws, mud, shedding fur, drool, messy meals and debris before they get into your car or hotel. They are designed for wiping sensitive areas and help to prevent your pet from tracking in allergens, pollen, or bacteria. Being waterless, they also help you to clean while keeping your pet calm during travel.



To find out more, visit thepawslab.co

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Tie handles, easy open and adventure ready



Helping the Ocean
Donation from each box sold to a grass roots turtle charity



www.simply2pets.com/dirtbag



Trixie expands travel, outdoor and home pet ranges



The German manufacturer has released a wide range of new products designed to make travelling, outdoor adventures and everyday life more comfortable for both pets and their owners.

A new bicycle trailer features a quick-fold system for easy transport and storage. The trailer can also be converted into a buggy using an optional two-wheel conversion kit.

The car range now includes a raised pet car seat and a new reversible car seat cover to offer a cool surface during summer.

A new pop-up dog tent provides portable shelter from the sun. It features an adjustable roof, and side panels allow flexible shade throughout the day, while mesh inserts improve ventilation.

The company has also expanded its

mobility range with a lightweight pet buggy designed for elderly, injured, anxious or very young pets. The removable basket doubles as a carrier, while suspended swivel wheels, an adjustable handle, rain cover and one-hand folding mechanism add convenience for everyday use.

Camping enthusiasts are catered for with a new folding camping pen made up of eight panels that create a secure enclosed area for dogs. The pen includes a zip entrance, viewing windows and ground pegs.

The latest feline furniture includes the CityStyle scratching post, combining contemporary home styling with practical climbing, scratching and resting spaces. Upholstered fabric, wood-effect panels and a powder-coated metal frame give the unit a modern furniture-inspired appearance.



Green Pantry's dog food range



Green Pantry, recently acquired by the owners of Burgess Pet Care, has launched a new line of dog food, developed alongside vets at Pickles Vets.

The range features four specific recipes focusing on weight control, mobility and joint

health (especially for senior dogs), skin and coat care, and digestive care.

The new, freshly cooked range is available in four formats (Digestive Care, Weight Control, Mobility & Senior and Skin & Coat Care). The range is available in 380g pouches or 3kg boxes with an RRP from £3.99.

Dr. Suzanne Moyes from Burgess Pet Care and Green Pantry commented on balancing specific needs with great taste and convenient feeding habits, "This was achieved over an 18-month process, which is much longer than our normal timelines. The complexity of our desired outcome meant it involved a lot of back and forth between our nutritionists."

To find out more, visit greenpantry.co.uk

Bake your own Christmas dog treats by Dog & Bond

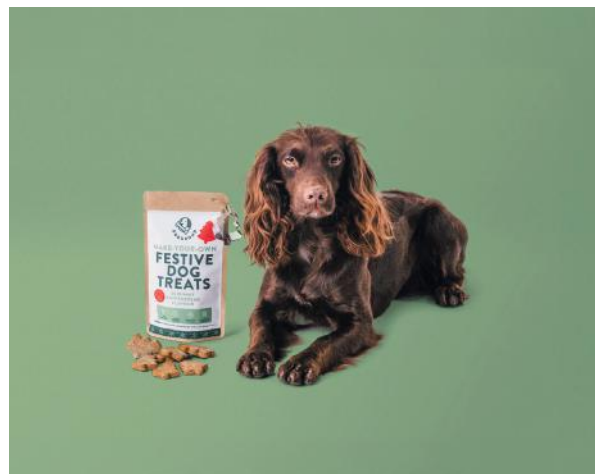
Dog & Bond's seasonal bake-at-home dog treats in a gingerbread flavour will be soon back in stock for 2026.

The treats are designed to be a perfect stocking filler to treat the dog while enjoying a baking experience with the family.

The mixture includes:

- Ground peanuts: filled with protein and healthy fats, promoting a shiny coat
- Ground ginger: has anti-inflammatory properties, supporting digestion and health
- Cinnamon: packed with antioxidants, it offers powerful anti-fungal and anti-inflammatory properties

The mixture, which requires just an additional egg and water before baking, also comes with a reusable Christmas tree cutter.



To find out more, visit dogandbond.com

To find out more, visit Trixie.de/en

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Beaphar's new pesticide-free parasite control



Beaphar has expanded its Dimethicare range with the launch of Beaphar Dimethicare Spray for Pets, Home & Car, and Beaphar Dimethicare Line-On for rabbits, ferrets and guinea pigs.

Dimethicare products physically immobilise fleas, ticks, mites and lice, offering an alternative to traditional insecticidal treatments and, with 70% of pet owners looking for natural solutions to fleas, the range gives retailers an opportunity to offer greater choice in pesticide-free parasite control.

Beaphar Dimethicare Spray for Pets, Home & Car is a dual-purpose spray for use on pets and their surroundings. It gives pet owners a convenient and cost-effective option.

Beaphar Dimethicare Line-On for rabbits, ferrets and guinea pigs extends pesticide-free parasite control into the small animal category.

Claire Edmunds, UK Marketing Manager for Beaphar, said, "By expanding the Dimethicare range, Beaphar is making it easier to offer affordable pesticide-free options for cats, dogs and small pets. It also gives shoppers more reason to turn to one trusted brand for the needs of the whole pet household."

To find out more, visit beaphar.co.uk

Trinkety Paws' holiday essentials

Trinkety Paws has launched a new durable range made from BioThane, a material chosen for its durability, easy-clean properties and all-weather versatility.

Founder, Nadine Berger, says the mission is simple, "Holidays with dogs should feel enjoyable, not stressful, and having easy-clean, durable equipment that still looks beautiful really does make a difference."

The new range consists of:

Handsfree training leads: Worn around the waist or across the body, they keep dogs secure while freeing owners' hands. They feature integrated grab handles offer instant control and is available in multiple designs.

Waterproof BioThane leads:

Odour-resistant, mud-proof and wipe-clean, these leads are ideal after sea swims, rainy woodland walks or muddy caravan parks. They stay flexible in all weather and dry quickly, ready for the next adventure.

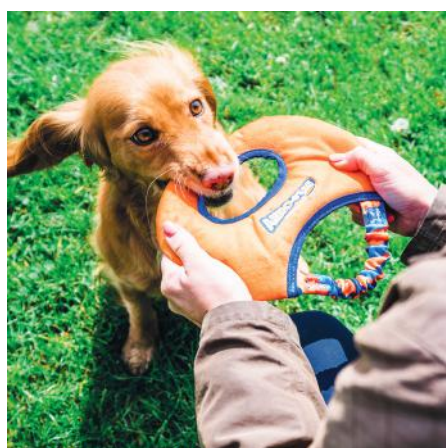
Long line leads: Perfect for beaches, countryside and National Park walks, long lines give dogs freedom to explore while keeping them safely under control. Lightweight, durable and easy to clean, they're a go-to for recall training and safe roaming.

Limited edition BioThane collars: Bold florals, woodland prints, artistic splatters and elegant colourways, all with the same adventure-ready durability.



To find out more, visit trinketypaws.co.uk

The Tug-E-Nuff Aero Tug



Tug-E-Nuff has expanded its interactive toy range with the launch of Aero-Tug, the frisbee that flies, floats and doubles as a tug toy.

Aero-Tug is made from durable ripstop fabric with foam padding, making it softer on dogs' teeth and mouths during those high-speed catches!

Weighing just 75g, it's also much lighter than most dog frisbees and the clever, weighted design helps it glide through the air while remaining soft enough for comfortable catches and easy carrying.

This frisbee toy also incorporates Tug-E-Nuff's signature shock-absorbing bungee handle, allowing owners to reward successful retrieves with a game of tug, while reducing impact on the dog's joints.

Danny Nelis-Rouse, Managing Director at Tug-E-Nuff, says, "We wanted to create a frisbee that offered more than a simple game of fetch. So many dogs love to retrieve but can struggle with returning the toy! By incorporating a dedicated tug element, Aero-Tug gives dog owners another way to reward engagement and build motivation during play and training."

To find out more, visit tug-e-nuff.com

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Puppy power shift

16

Why pet shop teams are playing a vital role in shaping better pet behaviour from day one

For independent pet retailers, the puppy category is more than a strong sales opportunity. It is often where a customer's understanding of dog behaviour begins.

Each year, an estimated one million puppies join UK households. Many owners are raising a dog for the first time, and they are doing so at a point when advice is everywhere but not always reliable. Social media, breeder guidance and online forums can leave new owners feeling informed, but not necessarily ready for the realities of early puppy development.

That gives the modern pet shop a bigger role than simply supplying food, toys and accessories. It is often the first place where owners ask practical questions, sense-check what they have been told and begin to understand what their puppy really needs.

From purchase point to first reality check

The early puppy conversation in-store is often the first time owners start to understand what day-to-day life with a puppy will really involve. Crates, feeding routines, sleep, mouthing and toilet training quickly move from things they have read about to decisions they need to make at home.

Handled well, this conversation is not about telling owners they are wrong. It is about helping them prepare for the reality of the first few weeks: broken sleep, biting, constant supervision, accidents in the house and the emotional pressure that can come with a new puppy.

This is where the pet specialist's role becomes important. They can turn general advice into practical guidance that makes sense for the owner, the puppy and the household.



Informed but unprepared

New puppy owners often arrive in-store having already read or watched plenty of advice online. They may know terms such as crate training, socialisation and enrichment, but still be unsure how those ideas work in a real home.

A crate, for example, may be understood in theory, but its role in supporting sleep,

settling and routine is often underestimated. House training is widely researched, but owners may be less prepared for the setbacks, timing and consistency it requires.

For pet specialists, the opportunity is to turn that online knowledge into clear, practical advice that owners can use from day one.



A crate debate

While a crate is not essential for a new puppy, it can be a highly effective tool when used appropriately and introduced as part of a wider structure of routine, rest and management. What is essential for every puppy, regardless of setup, is a safe and controlled environment where they can rest undisturbed, avoid unwanted behaviours when unsupervised, and gradually learn predictable routines around sleep, feeding and toilet training. For many owners, a crate provides a practical way to support this, helping to establish calm rest periods, aid house training through structure, and offer a secure space for travel or short periods of separation.

However, its effectiveness depends entirely on how it is introduced and used. When treated as punishment, or relied upon for prolonged confinement, it can create anxiety and resistance rather than security. Equally, not every puppy responds to a crate in the same way, and alternative set-ups such as puppy-proofed rooms or enclosed play areas can achieve the same core outcomes. Ultimately, the value lies not in the crate itself, but in whether the puppy's environment consistently delivers safety, rest and routine during the early developmental stage.

Behaviour begins on day one

One of the most important messages for new puppy owners is that behaviour does not start later. It begins as soon as the puppy enters the home.

Chewing, barking, whining, clinginess and accidents are all normal parts of early

development. However, many owners can see them as signs that something is going wrong, especially if their expectations have been shaped by social media, friends or outdated advice.

The way these behaviours are explained in-store matters. Framing them as normal stages, rather than problems that need immediate correction, can help owners feel more prepared for the first few weeks.

Consistency in guidance builds confidence

In the early stages of puppy ownership, confidence can be easily knocked. Small differences in advice, especially around feeding, house training or sleep routines, can quickly leave owners unsure about what to do next.

For retailers, this makes consistency important. When staff give clear, joined-up advice, owners are less likely to feel confused at a point when they are making decisions that will shape the puppy's routine.

That does not mean every conversation needs to follow a script. It means the whole team should work from the same basic principles, so every puppy owner receives clear and reliable guidance.

Managing the overload moment

Puppy owners rarely struggle with a lack of information; they struggle with too much of it.

First-time owners often arrive with plenty of research and detailed shopping lists, but still feel unsure when it comes to making decisions for their own puppy. At this stage, more information is not always helpful.

The best approach is often to focus on what matters most in the first few days, while making it clear that support does not end at the point of sale. This takes pressure off the owner and gives them a reason to return as their puppy grows and new questions arise.

Recognising early emotional pressure

The puppy category is highly emotional. Excitement is often mixed with doubt, tiredness and, in some cases, early regret.

In-store, this may show up as hesitation, repeated questions or comments about how hard the owner is finding the adjustment. Recognising this matters, because the customer may need reassurance as much as information.

In these conversations, clear and calm advice is more useful than trying to cover everything at once. Simplifying choices and normalising the early challenges of puppy ownership can make owners feel more confident and less alone.

Prevention, not correction

The best puppy guidance does not wait for problems to appear. It helps owners understand what is normal and how to prevent common issues from becoming harder to manage.

Early conversations around routine, boundaries, enrichment and rest are where this begins. Setting expectations around sleep from day one, for example, can stop owners mistaking normal night-time whining for a serious behaviour problem. Explaining chewing as a normal developmental stage also helps owners manage the home environment, rather than reacting only after damage has been done.

In practice, this means moving the conversation away from “how do I stop this?” and towards “how do we set things up so this is less likely to happen?” Sleep, feeding, play and rest all shape behaviour, and owners benefit from understanding how much consistency matters in the first few weeks.

The result is not only calmer puppies, but more confident owners who are better able to recognise normal puppy behaviour.

The language of early ownership

The language used in puppy conversations matters.

The way early behaviour is described can

shape how owners respond at home. If a puppy is described as “testing limits”, owners may feel they need to take control or correct the behaviour quickly. If the same behaviour is explained as exploration, learning or adjustment, it can encourage a calmer and more consistent response.

This shift in language may seem small, but it can make a real difference to how owners understand their puppy and build a positive relationship from the start.

The evolving role of the pet specialist

The modern pet shop is no longer just a place to buy puppy essentials. It is often one of the first places where new owners begin to understand what puppyhood really involves.

For independent retailers, that creates an important role. Staff can help owners make sense of the advice they have gathered, reassure them about normal puppy behaviour and guide them towards choices that support the first few weeks at home.

As puppy ownership continues to be shaped by online advice and social media, the value of clear, grounded, in-person guidance is only likely to grow.

Once that trust has been established, the next step is helping owners choose the products that will genuinely support their puppy's development.



The essentials

Food

Fish4dogs Finest White Fish

Image: Fish4Dogs



What we like:

- Contains 27% fresh white fish
- Gentle on tummies with easily digestible carbohydrates
- Assists in brain and eye development with high Omega 3 levels

To find out more, visit fish4dogs.com

Canagan Puppy Free Range Chicken

What we like:

- Contains DHA which aids brain development
- Specially formulated with prebiotics for gut health
- Nutritionally dense meaning up to 30% less can be fed



Image: Canagan

To find out more, visit canagan.com

Burgess Sensitive Puppy Turkey and Rice

Image: Pedigree Wholesale



What we like:

- Made with calcium to support growing bones
- Grows a shiny and glossy coat
- Suitable for puppies between 6 weeks and 12 months old

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk

Treats

Green & Wild's Puppy Chew-its

Image: Green & Wild



What we like:

- Made from 100% Buffalo
- Air-dried to retain nutrients
- Softer consistency, perfect for teething puppies

To find out more, visit greenandwilds.co.uk

Pointer Puppy Love

What we like:

- Enriched with vitamins and minerals
- Designed for dogs aged 12 weeks and older
- Crunchy consistency



Image: Pointer

To become a stockist, email pointer@foldhill.co.uk

Denzel's Puppy Training Bites

Image: Denzel's



What we like:

- Contains salmon, peanut butter and linseed
- A low calorie and single-source protein recipe
- Contained within 100% plastic-free packaging

To find out more, visit denzels.co.uk

Feeding time



Image: Rosewood

Rosewood Silicone Double Diner Slow Feeder

What we like:

- Encourages slow feeding from an early age
- Neutral design to fit into any home aesthetic
- Silicone base to stick to the floor better

To find out more, visit rosewoodpet.com



Image: Scruffs

Scruffs Aztec 2 Piece Dog Food & Water Bowl Set

What we like:

- The market's premium option
- Available in three different sizes
- Made from chip and bite resistant ceramic stoneware

To find out more, visit petslovescruffs.com



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

Bella Bowls One Part Wooden Ring with Metal Plate

What we like:

- An aesthetically pleasing wooden bowl holder
- Skid-resistant underside
- Metal bowl helps keep contents cool

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk



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Playtime!

Great&Small Party Monsters Purple

What we like:

- Funky design that will pique the interest of a puppy
- Encourages retrieving from an early age
- Small and lightweight, making it ideal for puppies

To find out more, visit we.pet



Image: we.pet

Mister Twister Olga Ostrich

What we like:

- Eye-catching character design that stands out
- Multi-way play value (rope, plush, squeaker)
- Collectable range appeal

To find out more, visit rosewoodpet.com



Image: Rosewood

Sportspet High Bounce Dimple Scented Mandarins

What we like:

- Bright and fun design that stands out
- Strong sensory play appeal
- Comes in a handy multipack of six

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

Time for a snooze

Lords and Labradors Cosy & Calming Puppy Crate

What we like:

- Machine washable
- Extra-plump sides for added cosiness
- Suitable for crate training

To find out more, visit lordsandlabradors.co.uk



Image: Lords and Labradors

Ancol Small Bite Teddy Bear Donut Bed

What we like:

- Supported bolstered edges to support the dog's neck
- Made from teddy bear fleece
- Donut shape encourages natural curling and nesting

To find out more, visit ancol.co.uk



Image: Ancol

Happy Pet Checkra Round Pet Bed

What we like:

- Made for curling, nesting, and head support
- A unique pattern in a neutral colour
- Classic donut-style round bed

To find out more, visit happypet.co.uk



Image: Happy Pet

Sustainables Sea Life

by
Animal Instincts

New

Introducing the Animal Instincts Sustainables Sea Life range, an eco-conscious collection designed to make a big splash on shelf.



Key Features:

Made from Recycled Bottles

Integrated squeaker to maximize entertainment

Multi-textured fabrics for sensory play

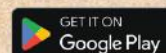
Bright, fun designs that look great on-shelf



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0115 982 3900

Looking smart

BullyBillows 2.5cm Lighter Combat Collar

What we like:

- Designed to encourage safe on-lead walking
- Clip-on design
- Fade-resistant print

To find out more, visit bullybillows.com

Image: BullyBillows



HugglePets Skye & Murphy Teddy Bear Dog Collar & Bow Set

What we like:

- Soft teddy fleece fabric
- Fully adjustable fit
- Detachable bow tie

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk

Image: Pedigree Wholesale



Trinkety Paws Seaborne – EasyFit Harness

What we like:

- Important to get a puppy used to harness walking from an early age
- Multiple lead attachment points
- Fully adjustable fit. Will not require changing as the puppy grows up

To find out more, visit trinketypaws.co.uk



Take a stroll

Coachi Waterproof Training Line

What we like:

- 10m in length, great for teaching recall
- Ideal for mimicking off-lead walking
- Very durable against the elements

To find out more, visit companyofanimals.com



Image: Company of Animals

Ruffwear Front Range Flex Lead

What we like:

- Made from a knit webbing that's light and flexible
- Subtle give in knit creates a dynamic and responsive feel
- Features a swivelling and lockable Crux Clip

To find out more, visit ruffwear.co.uk



Image: Ruffwear

Wyld Club Chiswick Lead

What we like:

- Lined with soft, cushioned neoprene on the handle
- Heavy duty 360° swivel spring clasp
- Metal D-ring to hang poop bag holder

To become a stockist, email trade@wyldclub.com



Image: Wyld Club

More to consider...

Don't forget these bits, too...

- Crate for the evening
- A legal way of securing your puppy in the car
- Poo bags (look for biodegradable)
- Puppy shampoo
- Puppy-safe teeth cleaning aids
- Lick mat (see page 34)
- Flea and tick treatment
- Comfort blankets



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Premium, natural and enrichment is key for the small animal market

While dogs and cats dominate as the UK's most popular pets, the small animal sector remains a valuable and all-too-often underestimated category for independent pet retailers

Reports compiled by UK Pet Food suggest there are approximately 2.7 million small mammals in UK homes, including rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters and other companion rodents, highlighting the consistent scale of the market. While a standalone value for the UK's small animal market is not publicly available, Statista reports that small mammal pet food alone is worth £64 million annually with projections suggesting further expansion over the next decade as small animal nutrition, health and enrichment products are growth areas.

Rabbits still lead the way

Among traditional small pets, rabbits remain the UK's most popular small mammal. There are conflicting reports on the exact number of rabbits owned by UK households: however, data gathered by UK Pet Food states the figure is in the region of 500,000.

Despite their popularity, rabbits are also one of the UK's most misunderstood pets. Welfare organisations such as the RSPCA and the Rabbit Welfare Association & Fund highlight that many owners underestimate their needs. Rabbits require:

- A large enclosure with constant access to exercise

- A companion rabbit, as they're highly social animals and generally shouldn't live alone

- A diet consisting mostly of hay, with fresh greens and limited pellets

- Regular veterinary care, including vaccinations and dental checks

- Mental stimulation through toys, tunnels, and digging opportunities

Reliable UK-wide population figures are not currently published for every species, but industry data consistently places guinea pigs as the second most popular small mammal, followed by hamsters, gerbils, rats, mice, chinchillas and degus.

What is driving the market?

For retailers, the most important story is not necessarily pet ownership growth, but higher spending per animal. The sector is being driven by:

- Premium nutrition – owners are increasingly seeking species-specific diets

- Welfare awareness – larger habitats, natural substrates and enrichment products are becoming standard expectations

- Expert advice – as in any market, independent pet shops can differentiate themselves through knowledgeable staff and tailored recommendations

Maximising lifetime customer value

Unlike the initial sale of the animal, the strongest long-term revenue comes from repeat-purchase consumables.

The highest-value categories are typically:

- Food and hay – particularly for rabbits and guinea pigs
- Bedding and substrates
- Treats and forage products
- Enrichment toys and chew
- Habitat accessories and replacements

Rabbits and guinea pig owners are especially valuable customers because their ongoing purchase of hay, forage and bedding will create frequent repeat visits and higher average basket values than many smaller rodent species.



A resilient category for independents

Small mammal pet food market value: £65 million

Small mammals in UK homes: 2.7 million

Pet rabbit population: 500,000

Most valuable categories: food, hay & bedding

Fastest-growing trend: premium welfare products



Where they live

The days of keeping small animals in confined spaces that fail to meet their size, activity levels and natural behaviours are increasingly behind us. Today's pet shops offer customers a wider choice of visually appealing habitats and enrichment products that put animal welfare at the heart of the buying decision. Fortunately, the market now has plenty of considered, welfare-led designs.

Little Friends Aventura

What we like:

- Ideal housing for degus, rats, ferrets & chinchillas
- Specifically designed for active small animals
- Built with a durable powder-coated wrought iron frame that resists chewing



Image: Classic Pet Products

To find out more, visit classicpetproducts.co.uk

Oxford Retreat Rabbit Hutch and Run

What we like:

- Extra-large walk-in design
- 1.7m ramp with safety barriers
- Heavy-duty timber frame to ensure long-lasting strength against absurd weather



Image: The Hutch Company

To find out more, visit thehutchcompany.co.uk

Multipla Hamster Crystal

What we like:

- Transparent walls allow a complete view of the animal inside
- Different floors can be detached for easy cleaning and transportation
- Can be expanded in size with other Ferplast products

To find out more, visit ferplast.co.uk



Image: Ferplast

Indoor Double Corner Cage

What we like:

- Huge corner design gives pets real roaming space indoors
- Two-level layout keeps guinea pigs active and entertained
- Fully accessorised straight out of the box (excludes water bottles)



Image: Classic Pet Products

To find out more, visit classicpetproducts.co.uk

PawHut 2 Tier Wooden Hamster Cage

What we like:

- Features a pull-out tray and latch top
- Two-tiered providing space to explore
- Panoramic view and fully ventilated



Image: PawHut

To find out more, visit mhstar.co.uk

Bedding

Tiny Friends Farm Eco Bedding

What we like:

- Highly absorbent and virtually dust-free
- Double-compressed for eco-friendly transportation
- Ethically sourced and manufactured in England

To find out more, visit supremepetfoods.com



Image: Supreme

Burgess Excel Nap & Nest Paper Pet Bedding

What we like:

- Made from unused offcuts from the teabag production industry
- Suitable for a broad range of small animals
- Easy to spot clean, reducing waste and making each bag last longer

To find out more, visit burgesspetcare.com



Image: Burgess

HayDay Bouncy Eco-Bedding

What we like:

- Absorbent, comfortable and safe
- Corrugated cardboard effectively traps warm air produced by pets
- 100% recycled and dust free

To find out more, visit hay-day.co.uk



Image: HayDay

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Enriching the mind

Hamster balls were once seen as an almost essential accessory, often sold alongside the hamster itself. Today, however, thinking has moved on.

The RSPCA states that, because a hamster's sight is very poor, the senses of touch, smell and hearing are vital means of exploring their environment. Being enclosed in an exercise ball could restrict the hamster's use of these senses and could compromise his/her ability to gain information

Ferplast Hamster Gym

What we like:

- Attachable to a main Ferplast cage via tubes (sold separately)
- Built-in wheel and ladder encourage daily exercise and enrichment
- Transparent construction to watch the animal enjoy their toy



Image: Ferplast

To find out more, visit ferplast.co.uk

Trixie Exercise Wheel

What we like:

- Smooth and quiet motion due to ball-bearing
- Solid running surface
- Made from bark wood



Image: Trixie

To find out more, visit trixie.de/en

Rosewood Reversible Snuggle Tunnel

What we like:

- Reversible design offers choice of soft plush or durable polycotton
- Creates a cosy hideaway and safe space
- Machine washable making maintenance easy



Image: Rosewood

To find out more, visit rosewoodpet.com

Happy Pet Small Animal Willow Value Pack

What we like:

- Keeps small animals engaged and prevents boredom
- Made from natural willow
- Maintains healthy teeth and gums



Image: Happy Pet

To find out more, visit happypet.co.uk

about the environment, which is likely to be very stressful.

With animal welfare now firmly at the forefront, pet shop owners should guide customers towards the growing range of safer, more enriching alternatives available. From larger, more stimulating habitats to tunnels, hides, chew toys, digging areas and supervised play spaces, there are now many ways to help reduce boredom and support the physical and mental wellbeing of hamsters and other small animals.

Natural Nibbles Applewood Sticks

What we like:

- Ideal for larger small animals such as rabbits and degus
- Naturally high in fibre to help support digestive systems
- Supports dental health



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk

One Turntable Enrichment Toy

What we like:

- Easily attach fruit and veg to the spokes for a unique eating experience
- Made from 100% beech wood
- Takes up minimal space within the small animal's cage



Image: Tater Pets

To find out more, visit taterpets.com

Ancol Enrichment Dreamcatcher

What we like:

- Contains loofah, seagrass, corn leaf, toothy hay, bark wood, edible dyes, raffia and applewood sticks
- Suitable for degus, hamsters, rabbits, gerbils, chinchillas, mice and rats
- Helps satisfy natural instincts



Image: Ancol

To find out more, visit ancol.co.uk

Natural Nibbles Play Tunnel

What we like:

- Chewable cardboard design supports natural gnawing and enrichment behaviour
- Modular/flexible use keeps small animals mentally stimulated and prevents boredom
- Simple, pet-safe materials with low risk compared to plastic tunnel systems



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk

NEW Products

Garden Bites small animal range now available



Where they'll snooze

Happy Pet Small Animal Hammock Hideaway

What we like:

- An interesting way to keep pets entertained and active in their habitat
- Made from safe and natural materials
- Also designed to be nibbled, promoting healthy teeth

To find out more, visit happypet.co.uk

Image: Happy Pet

HayPigs! Fleece Hidey Hut

What we like:

- A fun and unique design
- Comes with interchangeable pee pads
- Squashes flat without creasing

To find out more, visit haypigs.com

Image: HayPigs!

Ancol Sage Green Hammock

What we like:

- Made with ultra-soft teddy fleece
- Creates extra levels for climbing, lounging and daydreaming
- Promotes physical activity while also serving as a safe space, too

To find out more, visit ancol.co.uk

Image: Ancol

Little Friends Cuddle Up Igloo

What we like:

- Suitable for rats and chinchillas
- Spacious interior to accommodate multiple pets
- Consists of semi-rigid sides with foam-padded base for extra comfort

To find out more, visit classicpetproducts.co.uk

Image: Classic Pet Products



Image: Rosewood

MP Bergamo Knock-down Pet House

What we like:

- A safe space for rabbits while exploring the garden
- Made from durable post-industrial recycled plastic
- Features ventilation and a removable roof for easier cleaning

To find out more, visit rosewoodpet.com



Savic Sputnik Hideaway

What we like:

- Can be placed in the cage or hung from cage bars
- Two-part design detaches
- Provides a secure and cosy environment for resting and hiding

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk

Image: Pedigree Wholesale

Trixie House Ida

What we like:

- A unique sleeping arrangement for gerbils and mice
- Removable house
- Made with softwood without resin channels and constructed with non-toxic glue for animals

To find out more, visit trixie.de/en

Image: Trixie

Scruffs Small Animal Ceramic Set

What we like:

- Bright colours add fun to the small animal's cage
- A super-snug sleeping spot
- Bed comes as a set of three with a sand bath for digging and a food bowl, too

To find out more, visit petslovescruffs.com

Image: Scruffs



For when they're hungry



Image: Supreme

Science Selective Range

What we like:

- High-fibre products that support healthy digestion and daily gut function
- Naturally abrasive texture helps maintain strong, healthy teeth
- Encourages natural foraging behaviour for mental stimulation and enrichment

To find out more, visit supremepetfoods.com

Wagg Twitch Rabbit Nuggets

What we like:

- Designed to be fed alongside a diet of hay or fresh grass
- Balanced calcium and phosphorus levels to help maintain healthy teeth and bones
- Includes peas and apple pomace

To find out more, visit waggfoods.com



Image: Wagg

Burgess Excel Botanical Blends

What we like:

- Contains a mix of nettle leaf, dandelion leaf, marigold flower, burdock root and cleavers
- Encourages foraging behaviour
- Designed to be fed alongside a diet of hay

To find out more, visit burgesspetcare.com



Image: Burgess

Extra Select Rat & Mouse Feed

What we like:

- A nutrient-rich blend of cereals, grains, vegetables and seeds
- Available in both 5L and 12.5kg pack sizes, making it suitable for both pet owners and breeders
- Formulated to support overall health

To find out more, visit su-bridge.co.uk



Image: Extra Select

Beaphar CARE+® Food for Rats

What we like:

- Contains Omega-3 and 6 to help keep heart and blood vessels in optimal condition
- Supports gut health and reduces faecal odour
- Contains minimal dust to avoid damaging sensitive respiratory tract of rats

To find out more, visit beaphar.co.uk



Image: Beaphar

Marriage's Chinchilla Pellets

What we like:

- Contains linseed to support healthy skin
- Flavoured with chamomile, mint and parsley
- Targeted protein level to help maintain condition

To find out more, visit marriages.co.uk



Image: Marriage's



Image: Natures Grub

Natural Nibbles Dandelion Forage Tray

What we like:

- Adds variety to the diet of rabbits and rodents
- Packed full of natural vitamins and minerals
- A great source of dietary fibre

To find out more, visit naturesgrub.co.uk

Donald Cooke Garden Bites for small animals

What we like:

- Fun, fruit-shaped treats
- Supports natural chewing behaviour
- A vegetarian and vegan recipe

To find out more, visit donaldcooke.co.uk



Image: Donald Cooke



32

Seasonal routine shifts and the small pet sales opportunity

The summer holidays may not be over yet, but for pet retailers it pays to plan

As summer holidays come to an end, many households start adjusting to new routines. Children go back to school; annual leave comes to an end, and pets that have grown used to a hive of activity may suddenly find themselves spending more time alone. For others, the change is more significant, with late summer among the busiest times for house moves. For retailers, this seasonal shift is a good time to refresh in-store displays and anticipate what customers will need over the coming months.

Why enrichment matters

Enrichment is one of the clearest opportunities during the back-to-school



period. In the wild, rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters spend much of their time foraging, exploring and interacting with their surroundings. Pets tend to live in a more restricted environment, but that same drive for activity and investigation doesn't disappear. Without enough stimulation, small pets may be more likely to develop unwanted behaviours such as bar biting, excessive digging, or overgrooming – signs that are easy for owners to miss or misread, but which often point to underlying stress or boredom.

The physical consequences can be significant, too. Stress is a known trigger for digestive problems in rabbits, including reduced gut motility or gut stasis – a condition that is potentially life-threatening. Inactivity compounds this risk and can also contribute to weight gain and associated health problems over time. Enrichment is therefore not just a nice-to-have; for small herbivores, it's an important part of keeping them physically and mentally healthy.



**Science Selective
Garden Sticks**

Beyond the bowl

For rabbits and guinea pigs, feeding is a form of enrichment. Hay, nuggets, and high-fibre, no-added-sugar treats can be used to encourage grazing, gnawing, and searching behaviours, turning mealtimes into something more stimulating. This can be as simple as scatter-feeding pellets or hiding Selective Naturals treats in a bundle of hay.

Displaying hay, nuggets, treats and chew toys together can help customers see enrichment as part of everyday care rather than an optional extra and encourages linked purchases.

In addition to chew toys, simple DIY enrichment options are useful. Suggesting a cardboard tube stuffed with hay, or an egg box turned into a puzzle feeder, shows customers you have their interests at heart – not just the sale.

Relocation season

For some households, the shift in routine is more substantial. Nearly a third (32%) of house moves happen during late summer and early autumn. August is the most popular month, accounting for around 12% of all relocations.²

While moving to a new house can be an exciting time for owners, pets may not share the same sentiment. Rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters are prey species and tend to rely heavily on familiar surroundings, routines, scents and hiding places to feel secure. Disruption to routine and exposure to new environments can be challenging for these small pets.

Did you know?

50% of small pet owners also own a dog or cat.¹ Stock enrichment products across species to become a one-stop destination

This is a good time to make sure calming support is easy to find. Science Selective Calm & Relax Care can be highlighted as a relevant option for rabbits, guinea pigs and chinchillas, while familiar hay, bedding, hides, and favourite treats can all help owners create a more reassuring set-up before and after the move. Retailers may also see increased demand for practical moving-day essentials, such as travel carriers, water bottles and cleaning products. A simple 'Moving home with pets?' display header is often all it takes to make the need visible and prompt the purchase before moving day arrives.



**Science Selective
Calm & Relax Care**

Top tip

For pets that are not used to being left alone, particularly dogs and house rabbits, suggest gradually building up alone time. Owners should also make sure pets have fresh water, appropriate food and safe enrichment in place

Make lifestyle shifts easy to shop

Once the key seasonal needs are identified, the next step is to make them visible in-store. Simple, themed displays can help customers quickly recognise what they need, especially during busy periods when they may not have time to browse the full fixture.

Clear in-store messaging is key. Supreme offers a range of retail tools, including award-winning POS, free FSDUs, food samples and educational materials, helping retailers highlight key products and turn seasonal talking points into stronger in-store engagement. By combining clear merchandising with simple, welfare-led advice, retailers can make shopping easier, encourage linked purchases, and show customers the value of specialist small-pet expertise.

As routines shift, the stores that anticipate those needs will be best placed to build trust, support welfare and capture the seasonal sales opportunity.

Easy enrichment ideas to share with owners

Simple, low-cost activities can make a real difference. Share these ideas with customers looking for DIY options:

- Tuck a few treats into a portion of hay
- Fill cardboard tubes with hay, herbs and treats
- Turn an egg box into a puzzle feeder
- Peg leafy greens to a 'washing line'
- Use cardboard boxes to create hides or tunnels



Claire Hamblion-Jennings
Marketing Director at
Supreme Petfoods

References

1. Supreme Petfoods. Market Data and Category Insights 2024
2. [hoa.or.uk](https://www.hoa.or.uk)



Lick mats move into the mainstream

So how can pet shops help customers choose the right ones?

Interest in dog lick mats is growing, with search data from Years showing a 51% year-on-year increase and monthly volumes reaching around



24,000 searches, the highest level in five years.

The figures reflect a broader change in how owners think about feeding. Enrichment products can be useful tools for slowing meals, reducing boredom and giving dogs a little more mental stimulation at home.

Lick mats now sit alongside slow feeders, puzzle toys and treat-dispensing accessories as part of a growing enrichment category. Their appeal is simple: they are easy to use, relatively low-cost and can be linked naturally with treats, wet food, supplements and calming routines.

Social media has also helped drive interest, with owners sharing ideas for frozen toppings, calming routines and longer-lasting feeding activities. This has moved lick mats closer to everyday use.

For pet retailers, the opportunity is to help customers choose the right products and use them well. That means explaining when lick mats can be useful, what to put on them, how to clean them properly and which linked products can support safe, enjoyable enrichment feeding.

How to support the trend

High-quality mats



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

All For Paws Chill Out Lick A Crab

What we like:

- Stimulates pets to generate saliva with a textured surface
- Suction cup bottom keeps mat in place
- Made from food grade silicone

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk

LickiMat Slodog

What we like:

- The original lick mat for dogs
- Reduces stress at mealtime
- Suitable for all breeds of dogs

To find out more, visit lickimat.co.uk



Image: LickiMat

Rosewood Battersea Lick Mat

What we like:

- Crafted in Battersea's iconic blue colour
- Supports slower eating and reduces the risk of bloating
- Purchasing helps to support Battersea Dogs and Cats Home



Image: Rosewood

To find out more, visit rosewoodpet.com

Wahl Distract 'N' Groom Lick Mat

What we like:

- Can stick to both the floor, and wall
- A grooming aid to make the process less stressful
- Aids in releasing enjoyment endorphins



Image: Bestpets

To find out more, visit best-pets.co.uk

BullyBillows Dog Licking Munch Mats

What we like:

- Features four different textured areas
- Supports mental stimulation and reduces boredom
- Suction base to prevent slipping



Image: BullyBillows

To find out more, visit bullybillows.com

The PAW Planet Lick Mat

What we like:

- A fun space-themed design
- Soothing and anxiety reducing
- A distraction aid for grooming and vet inspections



Image: Su-Bridge

To find out more, visit su-bridge.co.uk

Bugalugs Triangle Lick Pad for Dogs & Cats

What we like:

- Alternate shape to others on the market
- Anti-spill lip to stop liquids spilling over
- A stimulating texture to keep things interesting



Image: Bugalugs

To find out more, visit bugalugspetcare.com

Blitz Snuffle Mats Dog Slow Feeder

What we like:

- Multiple eye-catching designs
- Sturdy, made from thick silicone
- Promotes calmness through licking



Image: Blitz Snuffle Mats

To find out more, visit blitzsnufflemats.co.uk

What to spread

Zoe Licky Snack

What we like:

- Available in five different flavours
- Can be frozen for extended enrichment
- Low in fat and packed with omega-3

To find out more, visit hagen.com



Image: Hagen

Cobbydog Premium Pate

What we like:

- Available in 11 different flavours
- A natural supplement to any dog's diet
- High in nutritional value

To find out more, visit cobbydog.com



Image: Cobbydog

What to spread

Arden Grange Tasty Paste Peanut Butter

What we like:

- Celebrating 30 years of Arden Grange
- A grain free and meat-free recipe
- Ideal for administering tablets

To find out more, visit ardengrange.com



Image: Arden Grange

JR Pet Products Cheese Paste

What we like:

- Made with real Edam cheese
- A natural source of milk proteins and calcium
- Perfect for dogs with food sensitivities

To find out more, visit jrpetsproducts.com



Image: JR Pet Products

Beaphar Multi-Vitamin Paste

What we like:

- Contains L-carnitine, which helps the body to effectively utilise fatty acids and convert them into energy
- Supports overall health and vitality
- Suitable for dogs of all ages and breeds

To find out more, visit beaphar.co.uk



Image: Beaphar



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

Natures Deli Duck Paste Pouch

What we like:

- Comes in a handy pouch with screw cap
- Made with 35% duck meat
- A grain-free, gluten-free and hypoallergenic recipe

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk



Image: Natures Grub

LickiMat Lickeez

What we like:

- Made with high-quality Irish beef and superfoods
- Easy to make, just add water
- Ideal for dogs of all ages

To find out more, visit naturesgrub.co.uk



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

Peamutt Peanut Butter for dogs

What we like:

- Natural ingredients with no added salt or sugar
- A source of healthy fat and protein
- A healthy way to distract dogs

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk

Pure & Natural Pure Pate Duck

What we like:

- A gluten-free and single-protein recipe
- High meat content, containing 97% duck
- Strong suitability for sensitive stomachs and hypoallergenic dogs

To find out more, visit su-bridge.co.uk



Image: Su-Bridge Pet Supplies

Dibo Finest Luxury Wild Boar Pate

What we like:

- Consists of 90% wild boar
- Suitable for puppies aged eight-weeks and older
- Rich in protein, vitamins and minerals

To find out more, visit thedogsbutcher.co.uk



Image: The Dogs Butcher

WHO'S A PRETTY BOY THEN?

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Full Wag ahead

As pet owners take a more preventative approach to their dogs' health and wellbeing, supplements are becoming an increasingly important category for retailers. PPM speaks to Liam Gamble MA VetMB MBA MRCVS, Commercial Director at Global Supplements, part of AB Agri, about the relaunch of Natural VetCare, its vet-led formulations, retailer support, and the brand's mission to keep dogs at 'Full Wag'



Natural VetCare

Natural VetCare – Q&A

1 The pet supplement category has seen remarkable growth in recent years. Why do you think more owners are turning to supplements as part of their pets' daily routine? Pet owners are becoming increasingly health-conscious, and pets are very much part of the family, so it's natural that we're seeing pet owners explore products which are similar to those used for their own health and wellbeing. Owners are looking for natural products that are genuinely backed by science, and that's exactly what we deliver with Natural VetCare – every

formulation is developed by our team of vets and nutritionists, so owners can trust what they're giving their dog. With the supplement market set to keep growing, NVC gives retailers a focused, credible range to capture their share of that growth.

2 Natural VetCare has a very distinctive look and feel. What was the thinking behind creating the clean, colourful and easy-to-understand look of the brand?

We wanted to simplify a category that can feel cluttered and overly clinical. Every pack uses clear, benefit-led naming that calls out

the specific "wellness win" of each product, so it's instantly easy for consumers to shop and just as easy for retailers to recommend with confidence at the shelf.

3 The range covers everything from joint care and digestion to calming and dental health. How did you decide which health areas to focus on first?

We built the range around real clinical insight. Working closely with our team of vets, we identified the health areas where dogs most commonly need support – and, just as importantly, where a well-formulated supplement can make the biggest difference to a dog's quality of life. That vet-led approach means every product in the range earns its place.

4 Are you seeing any particular health concerns or supplement categories growing faster than others?

The category as a whole is experiencing strong growth, but joint and digestive health remain the most common concerns we see. Dental health is an area retailers are increasingly telling us about – our Daily Dental powder has proven especially popular, with clinical results showing a significant reduction in plaque and tartar within 90 days.

5 Consumers are becoming increasingly discerning about ingredients. What are today's pet owners looking for, and how has that influenced your formulations?

Much like in pet food, supplement customers are becoming far more confident researching what they buy for their dogs. What mattered most to us was that every formulation genuinely improves a dog's life – every NVC product is formulated by vets and nutritionists and clinically dosed, not just dosed for marketing claims. We bring decades of supplement expertise from our market-leading NAF equine range, including the rigorous standards of traceability and quality that have made NAF the trusted choice of the British Equestrian teams.





6 Retailers have more choice than ever when it comes to supplements. What do you believe makes Natural VetCare stand out on the shelf?

With its bright colours and pet owner-friendly design, Natural VetCare literally stands out on shelf. The intuitive navigation on pack makes it easy for retailers to talk shoppers through the benefits in seconds. And with every product formulated for high efficacy, the quality speaks for itself – customers come back because it works.

7 As part of AB Agri's Global Supplements division, how does that backing help you develop new products and support retailers?

Being part of Associated British Foods gives us a deep understanding of retail partners, which means we're well placed not only to create products that genuinely meet pet owners' needs, but also to back that up with a strong support package for retailers. With NVC, that means strong retail margins, TV advertising, and our NVC Loyalty Scheme,

which keeps shoppers coming back to their local outlet. We know the market is tough right now, and we're committed to backing retailers and wholesalers to keep supplement customers within their channel.

8 For independent pet retailers, what advice would you give on growing sales within the supplement category? Are there particular merchandising or educational opportunities they shouldn't overlook?

We know there's strong demand for supplements from pet owners, and we want to empower retailers to have meaningful, vet-informed conversations with dog owners about keeping their dog at "Full Wag". We have a team of ten Area Sales Managers supporting NVC in the field, and we're rolling out a programme of in-person and online product training so retailers feel confident recommending the brand. We also have some genuinely eye-catching, disruptive POS available to help retailers bring the supplement category to life for their customers.

9 Looking ahead, where do you see the pet supplement market in the next three to five years?

We expect the market to continue growing at double digits, with market leaders like NVC driving that growth through continued innovation.

"The category as a whole is experiencing strong growth, but joint and digestive health remain the most common concerns we see"



10 Finally, what's next for Natural VetCare? Can you give us a glimpse of what's in the pipeline?

We have a number of exciting new areas of development in the pipeline, all rooted in the same vet-led approach that has shaped the range so far. We're always looking at where we can make the biggest difference to pets' lives, and there's plenty more to come from NVC over the next year – watch this space.



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Quick fire questions

Biggest trend in pet health right now?

Pet owners taking preventative steps to protect the long-term health and happiness of their beloved family members.

One misconception about pet supplements?

That you only need them once a health issue appears – prevention is always better than cure.

What's the most rewarding customer feedback you've received?

The best feedback for me is on older dogs feeling young again – maybe a reflection of my own reservations about ageing! We've also had a lot of customers over the moon with our Daily Dental product's effect on doggy breath. No more stinky kisses!

One word that sums up Natural VetCare?

Effective.



5 Make mealtimes more engaging

Encourage owners to turn their pet's usual meal into a longer, more engaging activity.

Enrichment feeders, lick mats, puzzle toys and slow feeders can encourage foraging and problem-solving while helping to keep pets occupied during noisy periods.

6 Plan exercise around fireworks

Remind dog owners to plan walks well before dusk and check the timings of any local firework displays. Exercising earlier in the day reduces the risk of dogs being startled by sudden bangs while outdoors.

7 Help customers reduce triggers

Simple changes around the home can help lessen the impact of fireworks. Encourage owners to close curtains, shut windows and use the television, radio or calming music to help mask sudden bangs. Retailers can reinforce this advice alongside product recommendations, helping customers create a quieter and more reassuring environment for their pets.

8 Recognise anxiety

Firework anxiety can look different from one pet to another. Common signs may include hiding, trembling, panting, pacing, vocalising, refusing food or seeking more reassurance than usual. Encourage owners to respect their pet's preferred coping strategy, avoid forcing interaction and allow them to retreat or stay close as they choose. More severe or persistent anxiety should be discussed with a vet.

9 Start a wider conversation

Bonfire Night can open up a broader conversation about a pet's emotional wellbeing. Retailers can help owners explore products and routines that support relaxation, enrichment and confidence throughout the year, rather than treating calming support as a one-off seasonal purchase. This also gives staff an opportunity to offer more tailored advice based on the individual pet.

10 Create solution-based displays

Bringing beds, blankets, calming products, chews and enrichment toys together in a dedicated Bonfire Night display (supported by simple advice on when and how to use them) can make the category easier for customers to navigate. It also helps position the store as a trusted source of practical support.

Calm before the crackle

How the right range can help calm pets and reassure owners this fireworks season

For many pet owners, Bonfire Night is not limited to a single evening. Fireworks can begin weeks beforehand and continue well beyond 5 November, making the season an extended period of worry for animals unsettled by loud bangs, flashes and unfamiliar smells. Independent pet retailers can play an important role by helping customers prepare early, understand the options available and choose products suited to their pet's individual needs.

and enrichment toys to create a complete 'Bonfire Night comfort zone'.

2 Stock comforting snuggle blankets

Soft blankets can help make a pet's chosen safe space feel warmer and more familiar. Encourage owners to introduce them well before fireworks season, placing them in the pet's usual bed or favourite resting area so they become part of its normal routine. Merchandising blankets alongside beds and calming products also gives retailers an easy way to build a complete comfort solution.

3 Early calming support

Many owners do not seek help until fireworks are already causing distress, so retailers should begin conversations about calming support well in advance. Diffusers and other calming products are generally intended to be introduced before stressful events, giving pets time to become familiar with them. Clear in-store messaging can help customers understand that early preparation is often more effective.

4 Recommend long-lasting snacks

For pets that are still willing to eat, long-lasting snacks, chews and treat-based activities can provide a useful focus. Chewing and licking encourage natural behaviours and may help some animals settle while fireworks are taking place. Retailers should remind owners that treats should always be given under supervision.



1 Create a calm corner

Encourage owners to create a dedicated safe space where their pet can retreat when fireworks begin. A quiet area away from windows and busy household activity can help reduce stress, while cave-style beds offer a cosy, enclosed environment that can feel more secure. Retailers can merchandise these alongside blankets, calming products

Time for a snuggle



Image: Lords & Labradors

Lords & Labradors Dog & Puppy Blanket in Opal Minerals

What we like:

- A thick fabric with an unusual weave
- Can be used as a bed or independently
- Available in four colours

To find out more, visit lordsandlabradors.co.uk



Image: BullyBillows

BullyBillows White Edition

What we like:

- Made from 50% flannel and 50% cashmere
- Designed to be gentle on both skin and fur
- Weighted design may provide a comforting, close feel

To find out more, visit bullybillows.com



Image: Scruffs

Scruffs Aspen Pet Blankets

What we like:

- Made from jacquard faux fur
- Designed to complement any home décor
- Machine washable

To find out more, visit petslovescruffs.com

Keeping things calm



Adaptil Calm Diffuser

What we like:

- Ideal for struggles with changes at home, loud noises, visitors, or being left alone
- Diffuses calming pheromones throughout a house 24/7
- Non-drowsy, keeping dogs calm while allowing them to stay alert

To find out more, visit petproducts.co.uk



Feliway Diffuser Starter Pack

What we like:

- A synthetic copy of the feline facial pheromone
- Creates a state of familiarity and security in the cat's local environment
- Lasts for up to four weeks

To find out more, visit best-pets.co.uk



Beaphar CatComfort Excellence Calming Diffuser

What we like:

- Promotes harmonious living
- Calms during fireworks and other stressful situations
- Designed to support cats during stress

To find out more, visit beaphar.co.uk

A safe space to hide



Image: Pedigree Wholesale

Happy Pet Cozzzy Bird Hut

What we like:

- Soft, enclosed design provides a sheltered resting space
- Made from a thick fleece material
- Easy to hang in a conventional bird cage

To find out more, visit happypet.co.uk



Image: Bestpets

ProRep Stone Cave

What we like:

- A durable resin construction for long-lasting use
- Provides a secure stress-reducing hiding place
- Realistic stone effect with moss detail

To find out more, visit peregrine.co.uk



Image: Beaphar

Everest Cat Cave & Bed – Duck

What we like:

- Made from New Zealand wool and all-natural dyes
- A safe escape for cats up to 9kg
- Can be used when flattened or as a cave

To find out more, visit everestpetsupply.co.uk

Image: Happy Pet

Image: Peregrine Livefoods

*Distracted with a snack***Woodbone Coffee Root Chews***What we like:*

- Cut off from the base of a coffee plant, not the branch
- 100% natural and preservative free
- Promotes dental health while distracting from outside events



Image: Woodbone

To find out more, visit woodbone.co.uk

Nutriment Turkey Hearts*What we like:*

- Made with turkey hearts
- A substantial, high-value treat for cats
- Can be offered as an occasional supervised snack



Image: Nutriment

To find out more, visit nutriment.co.uk

Rosewood Carrot Cottage*What we like:*

- A sheltered space made from parchment board covered in hay
- Topped with a real carrot roof
- A safe space to hide, and a distracting chew



Image: Rosewood

To find out more, visit rosewoodpet.com

*Keeping dinner time enriched***Catit Senses Food Tree***What we like:*

- Provides mental stimulation by encouraging natural hunting behaviours
- Designed with a sturdy base for strong playful swipes
- Offers a full sensory experience to your cat



Image: Catit

To find out more, visit catit.co.uk

Rosewood Dog Casino*What we like:*

- Challenges the pet to unlock hidden treats through steps
- Keep the dog mentally stimulated
- Distracts dogs for a prolonged period of time



Image: Rosewood

To find out more, visit rosewoodpet.com

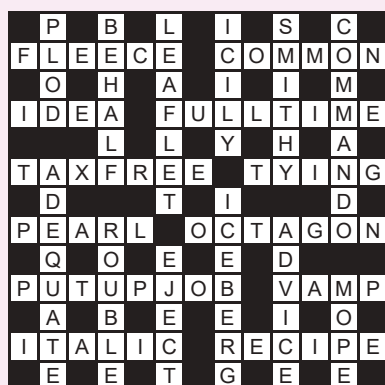
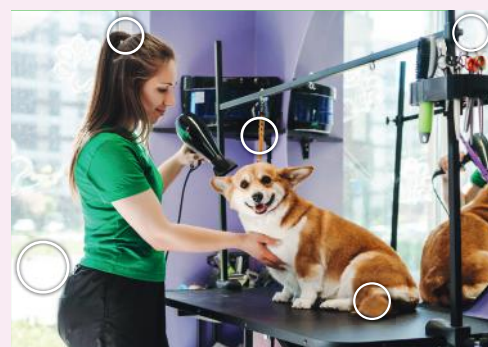
Trixie Sniffing Carpet*What we like:*

- Encourages sniffing and digging
- Two different tassel lengths to keeps things interesting
- Can be used as a distraction toy or for daily feeding



Image: Trixie

To find out more, visit trixie.de/en

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Coping with EXTREME heat

44

Sadly, extreme 'heat bombs' are predicted to become more frequent every year, but by planning ahead we can continue to enjoy summer safely with our dogs, writes Vicky Payne

We all know that we need to be careful with our dogs in hot temperatures, but with extreme temperatures becoming more common and lasting longer, how can we best keep our dogs safe?

What is heatstroke?

Heatstroke, or heat related illness (HRI) happens when a dog is unable to regulate their core body temperature and keep it below 41°C. This high core temperature leads to neurological symptoms but also causes blood to pool in the liver and spleen. This can cause shock and severe damage to the intestines and kidneys. Dogs that collapse with heatstroke have just a 50% survival rate even with veterinary treatment.

Awareness campaigns have traditionally focused on the risk to dogs left in cars, but caravans, conservatories, gardens, and even our homes can become dangerously hot for dogs. The good news is that only 5% of HRI cases vets see are from dogs left in cars, with just over 12% from other hot environments. The bad news is that over 70% are from exercise related heat stress.

Heatstroke symptoms

- Heavy panting and noisy breathing
- Restlessness
- Seeking shade and water
- Drooling
- Dark gums and dark pink tongue
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Lethargy and confusion
- Collapse and seizures

What temperature is dangerous?

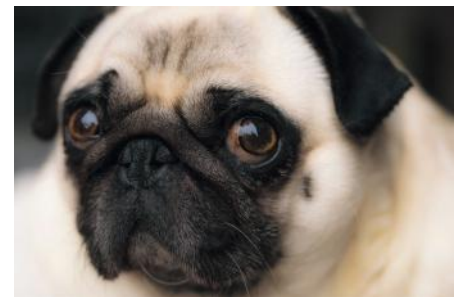
Data from 2022 showed that nearly 60% of HRI cases happened during Level 3 heat health alerts. These heat health alerts are issued when temperatures over 25-28°C are expected for more than one day. But HRI cases have been seen when the temperature is as low as 16°C.

Dogs can adapt to higher environmental temperatures, and I am sure we have all seen dogs on foreign holidays looking cool and relaxed when we were sweating buckets! It takes dogs at least 10 days to adapt to higher temperatures, and up to 60 to fully acclimatise. A big problem for UK dogs is that temperatures can fluctuate wildly. In May this year, single-figure temperatures,

"A powerful climate pattern known as El Niño is expected to return in the coming months and scientists are warning it could intensify, with far-reaching consequences for weather across the globe, including here in the UK."

London Evening Standard, May 2026

rain and hail were followed by a 30°C heatwave.



Which dogs are at higher risk?

Brachycephalic (short-faced) dogs are at higher risk of heatstroke, especially those with brachycephalic obstructive airway syndrome. Puppies and old dogs can also struggle more to maintain their body temperature. Being overweight or obese increases the risk of heatstroke, as may some underlying health conditions and medications.

What activities are dangerous?

Exercise in the heat is the biggest risk factor for HRI. Body temperature can rise dramatically after only a few minutes of intense activity. This doesn't mean all summer training and competition should be cancelled, just that organisers and handlers must be very aware of the need to rapidly cool all dogs.

For pet dogs, choose walks in the shade, on grass, or near water. Keep walks slow and short with more sniffing and less running. Walks where you have an option to take a shortcut home if your dog is getting warm are ideal.

Swimming can be a tempting option on a hot day but ensure any water you use is safe. Dogs can suffer cold water shock if they jump into deep cold water, or can be injured

on submerged debris. Swallowing excessive fresh water can lead to hyponatraemia, and salty seawater to hypernatraemia.



Cooling

The latest evidence-based advice on cooling dogs with heat stress down is to do it immediately and quickly.

- Get the dog into a shaded and well-ventilated area if you can
- Fit, conscious dogs can be immersed in a cold bath or other body of water
- Evaporative cooling is preferred for older dogs or those with health conditions. For evaporative cooling pour water on the dog and then use fans or air conditioning
- Placing the dog under a cold shower or hose can also be effective
- Avoid making the dog so cold that they shiver as this can raise the core body temperature
- Cool the dog down before travelling to the vet and make use of the vehicle's air conditioning to continue cooling
- Always call the vet before you travel so they can be prepared for your arrival
- Dogs that have suffered even mild symptoms of heat stress should be seen by a vet as there can be significant injury to the organs that may not show up at first

A novel approach to cooling dogs down after exercise is to train them to dunk their heads into a bucket of water! Dogs that dunked their heads into a bucket of 'room temperature' (22°C) water started to reduce core temperature in just 30 seconds, it also reduced temperature more and for longer than ice packs on a collar, a wet towel on the neck, or wet towels in the armpits.

Cooling vests and coats are a popular option for those who are working or

competing dogs in warm temperatures. Evaporative cooling vests ('swamp coolers') can be effective in reducing core temperature during and after exercise, but care must be taken to check dogs in them regularly. Once the vest warms up or dries, they risk contributing to a higher core temperature.

For most people, adding air conditioning to their home would be expensive for the number of days they would use it, and it can be difficult to retrofit to older houses. But there are ways you can prepare for heatwaves and extreme temperatures.

- Fans and portable evaporative coolers can be bought inexpensively and are useful for cooling smaller areas
- Training your dog to settle in any place you ask them to means you can keep them in a cool breeze, in the path of a fan, or out of a sunbeam (dogs aren't always sensible!)
- Mesh raised beds allow air to flow under the dog as well as over them, and damp towels or cooling mats can give short term relief
- Adopting the Mediterranean habits of keeping windows and curtains closed can help keep your home cool

Can I walk my dog in the heat?

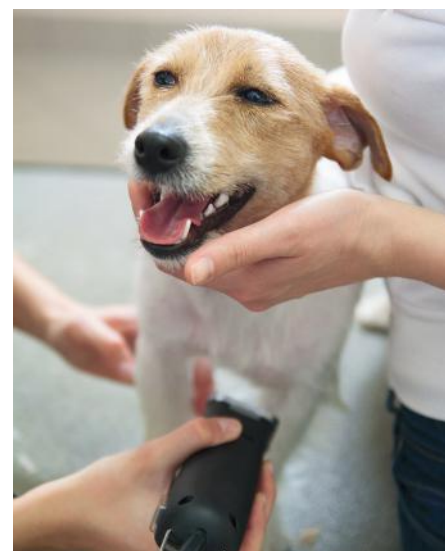
It seems obvious to say avoid walking your dog in the daytime heat, but some dogs are used to very rigid timetables. Varying your walking schedule in normal weather can help your dog adapt better to changes during extreme heat, as can building up a repertoire of alternative enrichment activities.



Scent work can be a low intensity activity that really uses a dog's brain, heel work and obedience exercises can be practised in the kitchen or garage, and food frozen into a chew toy is always a satisfying activity.

Transporting your dog in a heatwave

- Modern cars may have air-conditioning, but this rarely impacts the boot space where many dogs travel. Crates used for safety can further reduce airflow.
- Shading any windows over the dog space is vital, window films or detachable shades are both useful
- Crate fans can help move cool air over your dog, and cooling mats can be added (but be careful with dogs that chew!)
- If buying a new vehicle, consider a light-coloured vehicle to reflect heat and look for features that will help keep your dog cool
- Plan plenty of rest stops in your journey and consider a camera to help you monitor your dogs while driving

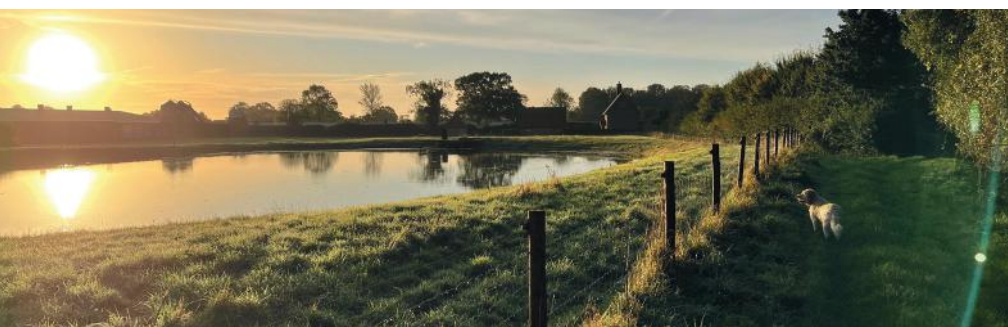


Grooming

A summer hair cut is appropriate for some breeds, and older heavily coated breeds can be easier to cool with their bellies clipped off even if you prefer to keep the body coat. Grooming out dead undercoat also helps keep dogs cool.



About Vicky
Holistic vet, Vicky Payne BVetMed MRCVS, is based in East Sussex, and qualified from the Royal Veterinary College in 2001. She uses a range of complementary therapies alongside conventional medicine and surgery



PPM puzzles

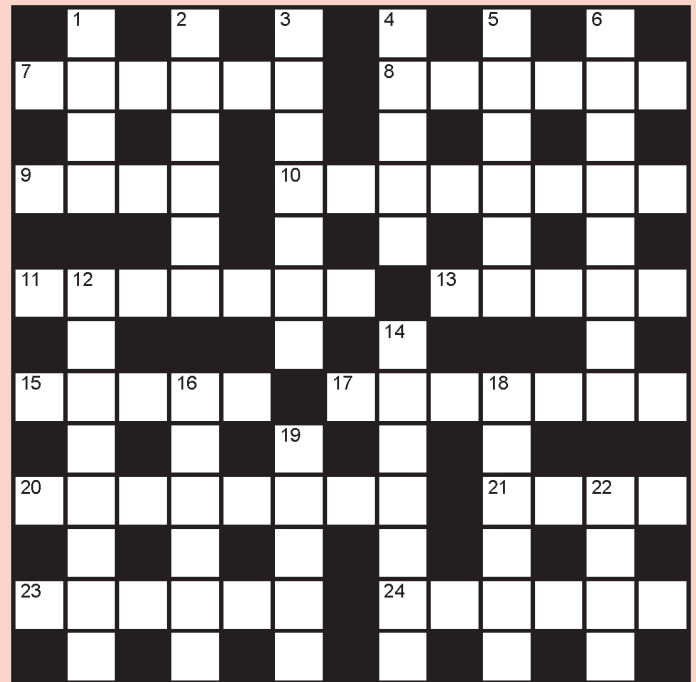
Take 10 minutes out of your day to have a fun, mental workout! We've got a series of puzzles to get those little grey cells working...

WORDSEARCH

B	A	N	B	U	R	Y	C	A	K	E
B	R	J	P	B	E	A	T	E	R	C
I	U	U	V	Q	F	U	S	E	D	H
Q	O	N	S	O	R	K	P	N	A	E
S	W	T	C	H	E	A	N	X	H	E
J	V	C	A	A	S	C	R	C	A	S
C	E	U	Y	G	H	L	O	E	S	E
W	G	P	N	G	V	L	L	E	B	O
F	O	R	K	I	C	L	M	G	I	H
M	O	R	I	S	I	N	G	R	N	O
C	A	F	E	D	V	E	T	A	R	T

Banbury cake	Cafe	Dill	Haggis
Beater	Cheese	Egg	Hot
Bin	Cloche	Fork	Mess
Brush	Corn	Fused	Mop
Bun	Cup	Grid	Rare

CROSSWORD



Across

- 7 Woolly coat of a sheep (6)
8 Shared by all, not rare (6)
9 Thought or concept (4)
10 Working all standard hours (4-4)
11 Exempt from government levy (3-4)
13 Fastening with a knot (5)
15 Oyster's precious gem (5)
17 Eight-sided figure (7)
20 Prearranged swindle (3-2,3)
21 Seduce or act as a temptress (4)
23 Slanted typeface style (6)
24 Cooking instructions (6)

Down

- 1 Walk heavily and slowly (4)
2 Interest or representation (9)
3 Small printed pamphlet (7)
4 In a frosty, cold manner (5)
5 Blacksmith's workshop (6)
6 Elite military raider (8)
12 Sufficient for the purpose (8)
14 Floating mass of ice (7)
16 Russian monetary unit (6)
18 Guidance or recommendations (6)
19 Expel or throw out (5)
22 Sulk and be listless (4)

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot the five differences between these two pics?



See page 42 for solutions.

Pet Product Marketing

For independent pet retailers

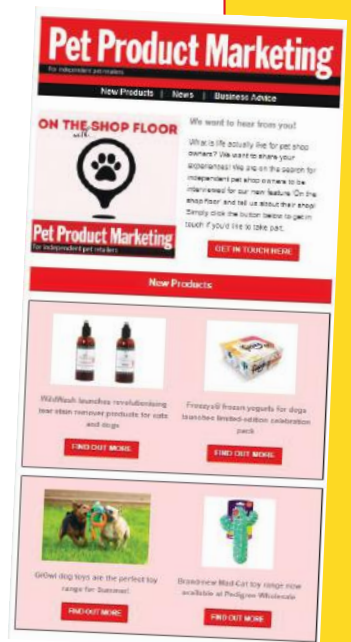
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