

PRESS RELEASE

BRITS URGED TO SHOP SMART ON PRESENTS FOR THEIR PETS AS £208.5m WORTH OF GIFTS THIS YEAR SET TO GO TO WASTE

- MORE THAN insurance reveals that the average owner will spend £23.30 on their pets this Christmas, amounting to over £631.9 million*
- Yet, over a third (33%) of pet owners believe their Christmas presents will go to waste, a total of £208.5** worth of gifts
- MORE THAN calls on owners to donate their pet's unloved presents to animal shelters and charities across the UK

8 December, London: Pet owners across the UK are being urged to shop smart when it comes to Christmas gifts for their furry companions, as new research from MORE THAN insurance reveals that Brits will be splurging an astonishing £631.9 million on pet presents over the festive period.

With 3.2 million households in the UK gaining a pet since March 2020¹, the increased appreciation for our dogs and cats can be seen in the rise in spending on pet-related items, with MORE THAN finding that almost three in ten (28%) are now spending more on their pet than they were pre-pandemic. Almost a fifth (19%) have admitted to spending more money on their pets Christmas presents than their parents, and over one in seven (16%) spending more than on their partner, with two thirds (67%) believing their pet appreciates the gifts they buy them.

Despite this increase in spending, more than a third (35%) of pet owners agree that they buy too many toys for their pet, increasing to over half (55%) amongst pet owners aged under 35. What's more, a third (33%) of pet owners say that the gifts they buy often go unloved, with MORE THAN's research finding that a majority of pets (54%) prefer to play with household items than new gifts; balls, cardboard boxes and old toys are cited being the most popular play items.

Top 6 pet presents bought by Brits

- Treats (73%)
- Cuddly toys (41%)
- Beds / blankets (22%)
- Christmas accessories (19%)
- Games (17%)
- Pet clothes (15%)

(Source: MORE THAN insurance, 2021)

To reduce the number of unloved gifts bought for dogs and cats, MORE THAN is encouraging pet owners to think more sustainably this Christmas, as a majority (51%)

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/56370780>

of owners recognise there is too much waste when buying pet presents. It comes as the consumer appetite for 'green gifting' continues to grow, as over two fifths (46%) of pet owners are now considering the sustainability of their Christmas presents.

With a majority of (57%) pet owners having considered donating their unloved presents to charities or shelters across the UK, MORE THAN is calling on customers to join them in going the extra mile for Britain's pets and re-gift presents that are not being used to local pet charities, to ensure unloved presents do not go to waste this Christmas.

Andrew Moore, a qualified vet and Pet Claims Director at MORE THAN insurance said:

"These days, many of us are looking to make gifting more environmentally friendly, and with our research showing that spending on pets is on the rise, it's important pet owners recognise the environmental impact unwanted pet presents have before they purchase them.

"As a pet insurer, the wellbeing of the nation's cats and dogs is of the utmost importance but we're urging owners to think twice about what will benefit their pets the most when buying gifts and, in the spirit of Christmas giving, making sure that gifts are donated to others if they go unloved at home."

HOW OWNERS CAN DONATE TO CHARITY

- Use Google to find your local animal shelter to find out how you can send donations
- Speak to your local charity shops to find out if they take animal toys
- Contact national pet charities to find out about their donation services

END

NOTES TO EDITORS

November 26 research: All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from Opinium. Total sample size was 2,114 UK adults, of whom 1,084 are pet owners. Fieldwork was undertaken between 23rd – 26th November.

**This figure has been extrapolated from MORE THAN data showing the average spend for UK pet owners at £23.30 and the UK pet owners in the survey celebrating Christmas being 51% which is 27.1 million adults (18+) across the UK (based on ONS population statistics), taking the total spend to £631.9 million.*

*** This has been extrapolated from MORE THAN data showing the average spend for pet owners at £23.30, the UK pet owners in the survey celebrating Christmas being 51% which is 27.1 million adults (18+) across the UK (based on ONS population statistics) and the finding that 33% of pet owners state their gifts will go unloved, taking the total wasted to £208.5.*

For more information or interview requests, please contact the team on MoreThanPR@grayling.com

About MORE THAN

MORE THAN is the direct financial services brand of Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance Ltd. Established in 2001, the company offers car, home, pet, and business insurance