



Why not help us by fostering a hedgehog until it's ready to be released back in to the wild?

Once rescue hedgehogs are medically stable and no longer taking medication, they can continue to gain weight in the care of one of our hedgehog fosterers until they are ready to be released back in to the wild. This also helps Heather's Hedgehog Hostel free up some much-needed space for hedgehogs which need more intensive care.

Our foster carers help by looking after one or more of the healthy hedgehogs at their own home. They provide suitable accommodation and food until the release weight of the hedgehog has been reached and the season is suitable.

OVERWINTERING HEDGEHOGS:

This can be for several months between November and March and could be for the entire of this period. The main focus of foster carers is to help the hedgehog gain weight and, in the process, stop them from hibernating until they are at a suitable safe weight for them to hibernate or be released.

ORPHANED BABY HOGLETS:

This is usually about 4 weeks in duration until the hoglet reaches a suitable weight for release back in to the wild. Normally over the spring and summer months but on occasion could lead up to the autumn months.

All hedgehog foster homes are vetted to ensure that the location is suitable. Please take a look at the information about becoming a fosterer below before registering your interest.



WHAT DO I NEED TO BECOME A HEDGEHOG FOSTERER?

There are a number of things you will need to become a fosterer of a hedgehog. You will be required to have all of these already or be willing to buy / source these items before a hedgehog is dropped off into your care.

But **DON'T BUY, OR SOURCE ANYTHING**, until we have confirmed you have been successful.

1. A quiet area away from human disturbance and activity.
2. A place which won't fall below 5 degrees in temperature. A shed, or garage might be ok but ideally inside in the warmth. This will help stop the hedgehog going into hibernation.
3. A hutch suitable for the hedgehog. This could be something like an old rabbit hutch for example.
4. Suitable bowls for both [food](#) and [water](#).
5. Suitable bedding for the hedgehog. This can be straw, newspaper or hay.
6. Enough food for the hedgehog. The hedgehog needs about 100g of food a night. A full foster period is from about November until March (5 months / 150 days).
7. Scales that measure in grams.
8. Leather, cloth, or rubber gloves to use when handling the hedgehog.
9. Rubber gloves to use when cleaning out the hutch.
10. A carrier or a box suitable to transport the hedgehog in case of emergencies.
11. Access to transport

WHAT WILL I BE REQUIRED TO DO AS A HEDGEHOG FOSTERER?

It is a responsibility and requires a certain amount of dedication to foster a hedgehog. You will be looking after the hedgehog's welfare which will require you to perform certain routine activities. A typical foster period would be several months but could be up to five months.

- Prepared to provide food for the hedgehog each night.



- Prepared to clean the hutch on a daily basis.
- Prepared to weigh the hedgehog on a regular basis (at least 3x weekly) and record those weights.
- **Not handle the hedgehog unless directed to do so by us.**
- **Willing to transport the hedgehog back to us if it becomes unwell** so we can administer medication or in an emergency take it to the vet which we use.
- For the safety of the hedgehog, you are willing to oversee all of the above responsibilities if a child is helping to assist you.

YOU WON'T BE ALONE.

Heather will help to provide advice and guidance while you are fostering a hedgehog.

- You will be given instructions in basic hedgehog care.
- You will be able to contact us any time for advice and guidance.

If you are interested, please complete the online form on the “Becoming a Foster Carer” page on our website

www.hedgehoghostel.co.uk/become-a-foster-carer