

MSP supports dogs charity



Members of the Scottish Parliament attended an event in Holyrood this week organised by Dogs Trust, the UK's largest dog welfare charity, to raise awareness of its annual Christmas campaign.

The event is aimed at highlighting the famous Dogs Trust slogan:- "A Dog is for Life, Not Just for Christmas" in a bid to combat the problem of dogs being given as gifts at Christmas only to be later abandoned in January.

The event gave attendees the opportunity to open a window on the charity's '12 Strays of Christmas' advent calendar and learn more about its campaign to encourage people to think carefully before taking on a dog, especially during the festive season.

Gordon Macdonald, MSP for Edinburgh Pentlands, said: *"I am delighted to support the Dogs Trust in their campaign to remind people that a dog really is for life and not just for Christmas. It is vital that dog ownership is seen as a long-term commitment and not just an impulse buy, especially at Christmas time. I would urge anyone thinking of buying a dog or puppy as a Christmas present to think twice before doing so."*

Laura Vallance, Public Affairs Manager at Dogs Trust said: *"We are really pleased so many MSPs are supporting us in raising*

awareness about this important issue in Scotland. We see an influx of dogs being handed in to our rehoming centres during December and January and we aim to curb this problem by educating people about responsible dog ownership and about the potential risks of buying pets online as an impulse purchase. Many unscrupulous breeders take advantage of the Christmas season to make money and what you see on a website is not always what you get, with many of these puppies being sold underage, sick and not properly socialised.”

Every year, Dogs Trust works to highlight the problems surrounding dogs being given as gifts at Christmas. The online sale of pets and animals means that impulse buying of animals has become an appealing option and the lure of a quick sale attracts many unscrupulous breeders particularly during the Christmas period.

Dogs Trust is the UK's largest dog welfare charity and cares for over 16,000 abandoned and unwanted dogs a year through its nationwide network of 18 rehoming centres, including Glasgow and West Calder. For more information about Dogs Trust, the UK's largest dog welfare charity, visit www.dogstrust.org.uk.