

Staffies deserve a second chance



The Scottish SPCA's annual Staffie Awareness Week is underway to encourage people to look past the breed's unfair reputation.

During the campaign, which runs from 13-19 October, Scotland's animal welfare charity hopes to challenge the negative labels that Staffordshire bull terriers have been given.

Research conducted by the charity in 2012 revealed a staggering 75% of Scots who would rehome a dog were unlikely to give a Staffordshire bull terrier or staffie crossbreed a home, with many believing the breed is dangerous and can't be trusted.

There are several staffies at the charity's Edinburgh and Lothians Animal Rescue and Rehoming Centre in Balerno and locals are being encouraged to go along and meet them.

Centre manager Diane Aitchison said, "It's heart-breaking that staffies have been labelled as dangerous and aggressive because, in reality, they tend to be friendly, affectionate and loyal.

"Staffies are real people dogs who thrive on human companionship, which is why it's so sad to see them living in kennels when they could be in loving homes.

"We never put a healthy animal to sleep and, because it can take months and in some cases over a year to rehome our staffies, the strain on our resources is enormous.

"Irresponsible dog ownership and over-breeding are the key issues and a huge number of staffies end up on the streets or

in the care of the Scottish SPCA.

“In many cases staffies have been taken on by certain members of society as a status symbol because of the perception that they are aggressive dogs. However, once these owners realise their staffie is actually friendly and good natured, they may abandon them or attempt to sell them on to an equally unsuitable person.

“There are also far too many people who don’t make sure their staffies are under control and well behaved in public, although this can happen with any breed of dog. As we say, there is no such thing as bad dogs, just bad owners.

“Staffie Awareness Week is our opportunity to highlight staffies as fantastic pets. Anyone thinking of taking on a dog is more than welcome to visit our centre to meet some of our super staffies who are patiently waiting to be offered a fresh start.”

Those interested in giving a staffie a good home can visit the Scottish SPCA’s Edinburgh and Lothians Animal Rescue and Rehoming Centre in Balerno. The centre is open seven days a week between 10am and 4pm