

# K9 Conference to tackle illegal importation of dogs



This Scottish Animal Week the Scottish SPCA has announced a new K9 Conference to be held on 9 November with the aim of tackling the multimillion pound puppy trade and illegal importation of dogs to the UK once and for all.

The conference is scheduled to be opened by Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Roseanna Cunningham and hosted by the University of Edinburgh with support from Dr Jo Williams of the Clinical and Health Psychology department.

Scotland's animal welfare charity continues to suffer first-hand the devastating effects of puppy farming and are more determined than ever to raise public awareness and tackle this issue once and for all.

Scottish SPCA Animal Rescue and Rehoming Centre Superintendent Sharon Comrie said, "We have issued a number of warnings to the public about the cruel reality of the puppy trade, particularly following the high profile Brownlie case last year, and more recently prolific puppy trader Gorman. Sadly, there is considerably more work to be done to bring an end to this horrendous trade.

"Lucy, the Chihuahua, was brought to us last month at around four to five weeks old after being bought by a member of public from the back of a car boot for £800.

"Despite paying this large sum of money, the member of public soon found herself out of her depth when the vet bills started piling up. Lucy was signed over to us a few days after being bought.

“Even with extensive vet care and 24hour supervision from me and other trained staff members here at the Society, Lucy was too ill to survive. Shortly after coming to us she was found to have fluid in her abdomen and an under-developed liver.

“Despite only being in my care for a few short weeks, I am devastated at her loss. It is beggars belief that these puppy farmers think so little of an animal’s welfare as to remove them from their mum before they are even fit enough to survive.”

Chief Superintendent Mike Flynn added, “In Lucy’s case, she had the best possible veterinary treatment available. Money and time were not issues and she still did not survive.

“Whoever sold Lucy undoubtedly sold the rest of the litter who may also be suffering from similar medical issues.

“Our Special Investigations Unit spearhead Operation Delphin, a multi-agency task force specifically focused on stopping the illegal puppy trade.

“This new conference is aimed at bringing experts from across the UK together to create a more robust strategy to bring an end to the suffering of dogs like Lucy.

“It is vital that we work together to ensure the health and welfare of animals, and bring an end to this prolific trade.”

South of Scotland MSP Emma Harper, who has been campaigning for an end to Puppy Trafficking since her election in 2016, said, “As an owner of three amazing rescue dogs myself, I would like to take the opportunity to encourage everyone to consider rescuing a dog instead of buying a pup, and if this is not an option, ensure the dog is coming from a responsible and registered breeder as this is the only way we can stop puppy trafficking and unscrupulous breeding. I will continue to work closely with the Scottish SPCA, and the Scottish Government to bring an end to the horrors of puppy

trafficking.”

Anyone concerned about the welfare of an animal should contact the Scottish SPCA animal helpline on 03000 999 999.

Photo by Scottish SPCA