

New 'Say No To Puppy Dealers' website launched



The Scottish SPCA has launched a new website www.saynotopuppydealers.co.uk in collaboration with The Scottish Government, Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home, RSPCA, Battersea, Dogs Trust, Trading Standards Scotland, Blue Cross, OneKind, BSAVA and the University of Edinburgh to help raise awareness about the devastating effects of puppy farming.

Chief Executive Kirsteen Campbell said, "The Scottish Government estimated that the illegal puppy trade was worth a conservative £13 million last year in Scotland alone – and that doesn't include the thousands of pounds in vet bills paid for by unsuspecting new owners.

"The growing illegal trade is, put simply, organised crime and at present there is little deterrent. While we already work with Scottish Government and our partners to improve animal welfare legislation we are conscious that demand for pups is growing and we must raise more awareness of the damaging effects of puppy farming to prevent people inadvertently funding the trade.

"Puppy farming has been a priority issue for us and our partners for quite some time. Individually we have been making some progress, but the industry has grown exponentially and

it's clear that a unified approach is the only way forward.

"We're delighted to be working with expert partners across the UK and hope the launch of our new collaborative website www.saynotopuppydealers.co.uk helps those looking to buy a puppy learn what to look out for, and make informed choices.

"Last year we worked with the University of Edinburgh to better understand the impact that puppy farming has on dog behaviour. Our research showed that puppy farmed pups are more likely to have a genetic disorder and are more at risk of deadly infectious diseases such as parvovirus, which can cost up to £4,000 to treat.

"It is our hope that this new website will make it easier for members of the public looking to buy a puppy to avoid falling victim of this cruel trade. We sincerely hope everyone gets behind our campaign and pledge to #SayNoToPuppyDealers, helping us bring an end to this evil industry once and for all."

Cabinet Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said, "I know it is easy to fall in love with a cute puppy advertised on-line, but people should think very carefully before buying a pet this way.

"I would encourage everyone to consider whether they could provide a "forever home" to a dog in an animal shelter in Scotland, rather than buying a new puppy, and if they still want a puppy to buy one directly from the breeder where they can see the puppy with its mother.

"The arrival of a new puppy should be a happy time but irresponsible and illegal breeding can lead to hefty vets' bills and even heartbreak for owners.

"Those involved in puppy dealing or illegal breeding can earn thousands of pounds from a single litter but while they count their cash, the dogs which they are exploiting inevitably

suffer.

“That’s why the Scottish SPCA’s campaign has my full support. I urge anyone planning to buy a puppy to follow the available guidance to ensure that they making an informed choice.”

BSAVA president Phil Lhermette welcomed the website launch saying, “The risks of puppy smugglers bringing overseas diseases into the UK and spreading them to other dogs, or their owners are significant, so anything we can do to reduce this problem is to be applauded.

“This website will help to direct owners and veterinary professionals to the appropriate bodies as well as alerting the public for the signs to look out for before they buy a puppy that may have been smuggled into this country.”

Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home Chief Executive Howard Bridges added, “The launch of the #SayNoToPuppyDealers website is a welcome step forward in the fight against puppy farming, which is having a devastating effect on animal welfare in Scotland.

“Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home is the penultimate destination for many animals that have been the victims of unscrupulous breeding activities, and while for some we can put end to this difficult journey through rehoming, it is essential that this issue is tackled at the source.

“We are proud to stand with Scottish SPCA and other organisations to support this campaign.”

To find out more and pledge your support visit www.saynotopuppydealers.co.uk.