

# Public urged to consider dangers of buying pet for Christmas

The Scottish SPCA is urging people in Edinburgh and the Lothians to carefully consider the dangers of buying a pet for a present this Christmas.



Every year, Scotland's animal welfare charity stops rehoming puppies, kittens and baby animals between 19 December and 3 January to avoid people taking away pets to give as gifts. All of the charity's rescue and rehoming centres are open for the public to visit throughout the festive period.

Manager of the Scottish SPCA rescue and rehoming centre in Balerno, Diane Aitchison said, "Every year we emphasise that

animals should not be an impulse buy or purchased as a surprise present. People have to give serious consideration to the commitment they are making when they buy a pet.

“Sadly, we are all too familiar with being asked to take in puppies, kittens and other pets given as gifts when the novelty has worn off. Animals are abandoned and as well being extremely cruel this is a criminal offence. We are also aware of people in the past who have brought an elderly dog to us before going to pick up a new puppy and sadly this is more common than most would expect.”

The message from the Scottish SPCA is that people should make sure they understand the commitment needed to give a pet the care and attention it needs before buying one.

Aitchison added, “We want all animals to find their forever home and owning a pet is an incredibly rewarding experience. But it is important that potential owners have a full understanding of the dedication required to look after an animal.”

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