

# Musselburgh woman fined for animal abuse



Photo courtesy of Scottish SPCA

43 year old woman has been fined £360 for failing to provide a suitable diet and proper veterinary treatment to two animals in her care, a cat named Ash and a Staffordshire bull terrier called Arae.l

Nicola Barnes of Whitecraig Crescent, Musselburgh was sentenced at Edinburgh Sheriff Court on 8 March.

Barnes pled guilty to causing unnecessary suffering by failing to provide for the animals in her care under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, Section 19(2)(a)(b).

Scottish SPCA inspector Stephanie McCrossan said, "This is a case of animal neglect which led to the unnecessary suffering of both Arael and Ash.

"We responded to a call from a concerned member of the public who was worried about Ash, an elderly cat who had mobility

issues.

"I arrived at the property and noted Ash looked extremely malnourished and was trying to eat from an empty crisp packet. I offered her some cat meat which she devoured. I could see she had four large green infected looking sores along her side.

"When I assessed Arael, the staffie, it was clear she had an obvious skin condition and smelled very strongly of yeast. There were open sores on her body and extensive hair loss.

"Both animals were in need of immediate veterinary attention.

"Upon veterinary examination, Ash was given a body score of 2/9 and weighed 3.2kg, a cat of her type should weigh between 4-4.5kg. She had bacterial conjunctivitis of both eyes as well as a large alopecic area on her chest and flank with scabbing and ulceration. After further examination, she was found to have a heart murmur and was severely anaemic.

"Arael was given a body score of 3/9 by the vet and she weighed only 13.6kg. There was alopecia and healing scabs on her ears and there was evidence of self-trauma and ulceration to the point of bleeding and infected areas with pus were also found.

"Both animals had a severe flea infestation which could clearly be seen in their coat. "Arael was taken to our rescue centre in in Edinburgh to receive further care and treatment but Ash stayed with the vet for ongoing observation.

"Sadly, Ash's red blood cell count deteriorated drastically and the veterinary staff made the tough decision to put her to sleep on welfare grounds.

"The suffering Ash and Arael faced was unnecessary and could have been easily avoided with proper diet and vet attention. This level of neglect didn't happen overnight."

If anyone has concerns regarding the welfare of an animal they should contact the confidential Scottish SPCA animal helpline on 03000 999 999.