



DEBATE PACK

Number CDP 2016/0056, 4 March 2016

Debate pack: Welfare of young dogs bred for sale

This Debate Pack has been produced ahead of the debate on the welfare of young dogs bred for sale in Westminster Hall on Tuesday 7th March 2016. The subject for the debate has been chosen by the Backbench Business Committee.

It is intended to provide useful information for Members, including press and parliamentary material, on issues relating to dog breeding and the sale of dogs. More detailed briefings can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

Oliver Bennett
Jacqueline Baker
Hannah Cromarty

Contents

1.	Summary	2
2.	Press Articles	3
3.	Press releases	4
4.	Parliamentary material	14
4.1	Parliamentary questions	14
4.2	Debates	16
4.3	Early Day Motions	17
4.4	Petition to Parliament	17
5.	Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs consultation on review of animal establishments licensing in England	18
6.	Useful links and further reading	20

1. Summary

Animal welfare is a devolved matter. A range of legislation applies to the breeding of dogs. For example, in England and Scotland, the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 and the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999 require the licencing of dog breeders. 'Hobby' breeders who produce less than 5 litters in any 12 month period are not required to have a licence. In Wales the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014 apply.

The UK Government is [currently consulting on changes to the regulation of dog breeders](#) and other animal establishments in England.

Some animal welfare organisations have raised concerns about animal welfare in the dog breeding sector. Concerns have been raised in particular about the international trade in puppies and the extent to which licensing arrangements apply to those who sell dogs, including via the internet. There have been calls for changes to legislation and for better enforcement.

2. Press Articles

BBC News 19 February 2016

'Designer' puppy boom boosts unlicensed breeders – RSPCA

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35609471>

Daily Mirror 9 February 2016

Dog lovers sold a pup over animal welfare as banned pet shop owner takes delivery

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/dog-lovers-sold-pup-over-7303480>

Vet Times 6 January 2016

We will get there – dog by dog

<http://www.vettimes.co.uk/we-will-get-there-dog-by-dog/>

Daily Telegraph 20 December 2015

Online puppy sellers to be put on tighter lead

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/12060212/Online-puppy-sellers-to-be-put-on-tighter-lead.html>

Evening Standard 26 October 2015

Ban cruel and deadly trade in dogs reared in puppy farms, demand vets

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/ban-cruel-and-deadly-trade-in-dogs-reared-in-puppy-farms-demand-vets-a3099176.html>

Daily Mirror 15 October 2015

Heartbroken couple only had puppy for three days before she died after being duped by illegal puppy traders

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/heartbroken-couple-only-puppy-three-6642721>

Daily Mail 9 August 2015

Despicable: They posed as middle-class dog lovers selling pedigree pups. In fact they were a vile gang trading in pets so inbred they were doomed to die painfully within weeks

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3189714/Despicable-posed-middle-class-dog-lovers-selling-pedigree-pups-fact-vile-gang-trading-pets-inbred-doomed-die-painfully-weeks.html#ixzz41vZY2fuO>

Guardian 13 July 2015

Pets are not for profit. Grazia should be ashamed to suggest otherwise

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/13/pet-profit-grazia-breeding-dog-cat-animal-rescue>

Daily Mail 16 May 2015

The shameful truth about UK's squalid puppy farms: Greedy breeders caught keeping dogs in dirty cramped cages

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3189714/Despicable-posed-middle-class-dog-lovers-selling-pedigree-pups-fact-vile-gang-trading-pets-inbred-doomed-die-painfully-weeks.html#ixzz41vZY2fuO>

3. Press releases

[‘Animal welfare inquiry launched’](#), **Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Sub-Committee** **4 February 2016**

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Sub-Committee is holding a series of short inquiries on animal welfare over the course of this Parliament. The first inquiry focuses on domestic pets, including cats, dogs and horses. The Committee also intends to consider issues surrounding exotic pets at a later date.

- [Inquiry: Animal welfare: domestic pets](#)
- [Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee](#)

In the UK, about 1 in 2 households own a pet with around 21 million pets owned (excluding fish). The UK pet population is estimated at nine million dogs and approximately 8 million cats. The [Animal Welfare Act](#) places a legal obligation on owners and keepers of animals to care for them properly. The inquiry will examine the effectiveness of the Act and its enforcement with regards to domestic animals. The inquiry will also examine whether that Act and other existing legislation remains fit for purpose in the age of the internet with regards to the sale of domestic pets.

Terms of reference

Written submissions are invited on the following issues:

- The effectiveness of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 with regard to domestic pets
- Regulation surrounding the sale of domestic pets, including online sales and advertising
- Enforcement of current animal welfare legislation, including prosecution of offences by the police, local authorities, the RSPCA and others
- Comparative approaches to enforcement in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

Notes on submissions

As a guideline, submissions should state clearly who the submission is from e.g. ‘Written evidence submitted by xxxx’ and be no longer than 1500 words, please [contact](#) the Committee staff if you wish to discuss this.

- [Send a written submission via the animal welfare: domestic pets inquiry page](#)

Deadline for submissions

Submissions should arrive by noon on Thursday 17 March 2016

[‘RSPCA welcomes European Parliament resolution to end illegal trafficking of pets’](#),

**RSPCA,
25 February 2016**

The RSPCA has welcomed the European Parliament’s adoption of a resolution formally calling for action to tackle the growing illegal trade in pets.

The Parliament (EP) is calling on the European Commission to take action to try to stop the illegal trafficking of dogs and cats.

The issue has become a major concern for the RSPCA, and other animal welfare organisations, since the Pet Travel Scheme was introduced in 2003.

This system, which was designed to allow people to travel with their pets for holidays and for shows, is now all too often exploited by animal traffickers for commercial purposes. In 2015 alone, 93,424 dogs were imported into the UK for commercial and noncommercial reasons and 85,730 of those came from within the EU.

The RSPCA is particularly concerned about the number of puppies being imported, under this scheme, from European countries where large-scale puppy farms are known to operate.

The charity’s puppy report - *‘Sold a pup? Exposing the breeding, trade and sale of puppies’* - published last week, lifts the lid on the scale of the puppy trade and market in England, and also revealed what countries appear to be fuelling the problem (see graphic in PDF), as well as the trade routes likely used to illegally import these pups.

The EP Resolution, coordinated by Renate Sommer MEP, was underpinned by Eurogroup for Animals’ *Protect Our Pets* campaign.

The RSPCA estimates, in its recent report, that more than 70,000 puppies were imported into the UK - 30,000 from illegal farms in Romania, Hungary, Poland and Lithuania; and 40,000 from Ireland - over the last 12 months.

David Bowles, assistant director of external affairs at the RSPCA, said: “There is a huge demand for particular breeds and designer crossbreeds in the UK and responsible, regulated breeders cannot produce enough puppies. This means that unscrupulous and unregulated breeders and dealers are filling the gap with puppies, many of which are illegally trafficked into the country.

“A lot of these puppies are bred in horrendous conditions by large-scale breeders with little or no consideration for the welfare of the animals themselves. They may be taken from their mothers when they are too young and transported across the EU without vaccinations or legitimate paperwork.

“Many of these puppies contract life-threatening diseases and are at risk of developing behavioural issues in later life.

“That’s why we’ve launched the Scrap the Puppy Trade campaign, to tackle this issue head-on. We want the Government in England to introduce legislation which would help bring this illegal - but profitable - trade to an end.

“Just two of the recommendations we’re making to Westminster is to increase risk-based spot checks at Dover to enforce the rules on non-commercial trade in dogs and puppies; and to transfer the responsibility for implementing and enforcing the PETS system from the ferry companies to the statutory border control agency.”

According to Eurogroup for Animals, the trafficking of pets is estimated to be the third most profitable illegal trade after weapons and drugs within the EU. And a recent study found that the trade in cats and dogs in the EU was worth €1.3 billion annually.

A Eurogroup for Animals spokesperson said: "This Resolution sends a clear signal to the European Commission that it is time to act to stop this horrific, illegal trade. They have the powers in place, they have the evidence from their own study, and now they have the clear political will from the elected representatives of the Union too. My sincere thanks to Renate Sommer and to all those who voted for the motion."

Renate Sommer MEP, the instigator of the Parliament's Resolution, added: "This Resolution seeks to mitigate the most opaque elements of the Pet Travel Scheme, namely by harmonising the national identification and registration systems and requirements for pets across the EU. Such a harmonisation would provide greater certainties over the age of any given animal, its vaccination status, and would allow for proper cross-border traceability.

"Many Member States already have systems for the identification and registration of pets. We are not seeking to reinvent the wheel here - we do not see the need for some sort of single EU level database. All we need is to have the same requirements, with compatible systems in each Member State. This should neither be beyond the wit of EU Governments, nor should it cause any concerns with the Commission over the issue of subsidiarity.

"The evidence is clear, as is the solution. As well as being our companions, pets do pose serious transmissible disease threats to animals and humans alike. I now hope that the Commission will have the courage to take the necessary political decision, based on our Resolution, so that we can end this cruel inhumane trade, and so that Europe's pets, animals and owners alike are better protected in the future."

Ends

Notes to editors

- The full Puppy Report: *‘Sold a pup? Exposing the breeding, trade and sale of puppies’* is available from the press office or [online](#).

- The RSPCA is asking members of the public to support our Scrap the Puppy Trade campaign and sign our petition at www.rspca.org.uk/scrapthepuppytrade to tell the UK Government, responsible for animal welfare in England, that puppies are more precious than pieces of metal.

'50,000 people join RSPCA in call to scrap the puppy trade',
RSPCA
29 January 2016

Tens of thousands of people have signed RSPCA petition calling on Westminster government to introduce mandatory licensing for anyone selling puppies

Just three months ago, the RSPCA launched a national campaign to tackle the puppy trade in England. The main aim of the Scrap the Puppy Trade campaign is to encourage the government to introduce laws in England to combat puppy dealers selling sick and dying puppies.

The RSPCA launched its campaign in October along with a petition which has since been signed by 50,000 people.

And a survey, carried out by the charity in the run-up to Christmas, revealed that 82% of people want to see the unscrupulous puppy farming industry scrapped.

David Bowles, assistant director of public affairs at the RSPCA, said: "We're pleased that tens of thousands of people have backed our campaign and taken action by signing our petition.

"It just goes to show that the public are also concerned about the number of puppies being traded like scrap metal with no regard for their welfare, or even if they live or die.

"We're urging all of those people out there who haven't yet signed our petition to get online and add their name."

The puppy dealing, farming and trafficking issue is on the increase and, over the last three years, the RSPCA has rescued more than 1,000 dogs from the trade. The charity has also seen a 122% increase in the number of calls about the puppy trade over the last five years.

And we are also hearing more and more heartbreaking stories from people who have bought puppies that have, sometimes within days, fallen ill or died.

David added: "Puppy trafficking is big business and dealers are getting rich from duping members of the public and leaving a trail of sick and dead puppies behind them, not to mention the heartache of families that have bought puppies.

"It is far too easy to sell puppies and current laws are failing puppies and their parents. The RSPCA wants to see Westminster treat the

issue of puppy dealing in England as seriously as they did scrap metal and license anyone who sells a puppy.

“This would not stop illegal trading altogether but it would help to remove the huge layer of unregulated puppy dealing we’re currently battling on a daily basis. Local authorities would have the tools they need to act and improve protections for puppy buyers too.”

The RSPCA’s Special Operations Unit (SOU), which investigates puppy farms, said complex set-ups are rife up and down the country.

The RSPCA is now calling for mandatory licensing for anyone selling puppies in England to try to hit the puppy trade as a whole - from organised illegal trafficking to opportunistic backstreet breeding. This would mean:

- Anyone selling a puppy must have a licence.
- Strong penalties & fines for anyone caught selling a puppy without a licence.
- A national database of puppy sellers (funded by licence fees) to aid enforcement.
- All internet and offline advertisers (like Pets4Homes, PreLoved, Friday Ad) must display the licence number of the seller in order to list an advert.

The RSPCA is now urging people to tell the UK Government that puppies are more precious than pieces of metal by signing our petition at www.rspca.org.uk/scrapthepuppytrade.

The RSPCA is a charity and we rely on public donations to exist. To assist our inspectors in carrying out their vital work please text HELP to 78866 to give £3 (Texts cost £3 + one standard network rate message).

[‘RSPCA shocked at staggering numbers of animals trafficked into UK from EU’](#)

RSPCA

24 January 2016

Concern for welfare of animals as DEFRA reveals imports from five countries with large puppy farming operations are up 75%

The RSPCA has called for Westminster Government to tackle the illegal trade in puppies after new figures revealed an increase in the number of dogs being imported into the UK from EU countries. DEFRA announced on Thursday (21 January) the number of dogs trafficked into the country for commercial and noncommercial reasons in 2015. And the statistics reveal that imports from Ireland, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, and Romania - all countries identified as having large scale puppy farm operations - have risen by 75%.

In October 2015, the RSPCA launched its Scrap the Puppy Trade campaign to tackle the unscrupulous puppy breeders and traders operating in the England, as well as those importing from overseas.

The charity is concerned about the way many puppies are bred and

sold like commodities with little or no regard to their future well-being. Some puppies die prematurely or develop behavioural or health problems as a result of poor breeding.

The Society is calling on the Westminster Government to develop legislation which tackles the root causes of the problem, including cutting off the trade in illegally imported puppies from Europe with increased enforcement at our borders and with increased accountability and monitoring for anyone breeding puppies. The figures show that while imports of dogs from non-UK EU countries rose by 7%, imports from those five countries rose by 75%. And 38% of all dogs imported to the UK come from the five countries where puppy farming operates on a large scale: Lithuania, Hungary, Romania, Poland and Ireland.

That means of the 93,424 dogs imported to the UK in 2015, 33,249 came from one of these five.

David Bowles, the RSPCA's head of public affairs, said: "We are appalled by the figures released by DEFRA, which show the shocking scale of this problem.

"What is particularly concerning is the number of animals coming into the UK from countries such as Romania and Ireland, where we know puppy farmers and breeders are trying to cash in on the demand for certain dog breeds here in the UK.

"Many of the thousands of dogs coming into this country every year may well have started their life in appalling conditions on a puppy farm."

David added: "While there is a demand for cheap, pure-bred and fashionable crossbreed puppies, breeders, dealers and traders will find a way to sell them.

"Puppy trafficking is big business, with dealers exploiting the current lack of enforcement at our ports and making huge profits bringing in large numbers of highly sought after puppies.

"Many buyers won't be aware in what conditions their puppy has been bred and raised nor where their puppy has come from. They are effectively buying blind.

"Many of the puppies being imported are too young to have been removed from their mothers and have not been vaccinated against disease. Some puppies die in transit and many fall sick or die shortly after purchase, leaving their owners heartbroken and lumbered with huge vet bills.

"We believe that if we are to seriously tackle the poor breeding and illegal trade in puppies, the tap needs to be switched off. We need to see an overhaul of current legislation and improved enforcement which tackles the root causes of the problem."

Commercial and noncommercial imports from Romania in 2015 rose by a staggering 88% from the previous year. The country is the

largest exporter of dogs to the UK, with 10,800 coming into the country last year.

Imports from Ireland are now finally being declared and are at their highest, with more than 10,000 entering the UK in 2015.

Meanwhile, non-UK EU imports have risen by 7% and commercial imports also rose by 7%.

The RSPCA is asking members of the public to support our Scrap the Puppy Trade campaign and sign our petition at www.rspca.org.uk/scrapthepuppytrade to tell Westminster that puppies are more precious than pieces of metal and to bring in new legislation to tackle puppy imports and the puppy trade in England .

Notes to editors

- 93,424 animals were imported into the UK in 2015 for commercial and noncommercial reasons.
- 85,730 animals were imported into the UK in 2015 from within the EU.
- 33,249 animals were imported into the UK in 2015 from Ireland, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland and Romania - that's up 75% (14,339) from 18,910 in 2014.

'Tougher dog breeding licence controls to protect puppies',
DEFRA
20 December 2015

Tougher dog breeding licensing to protect the welfare of puppies from back street breeders will be introduced under proposals announced today.

A [consultation is seeking to strengthen the regulations around dog breeding and pet sales](#) to make it easier to identify and take action against irresponsible breeders who pay little regard to the health and welfare of the puppies they raise. This is a particular problem amongst smaller breeding establishments – known as 'backstreet breeders' – which supply thousands of dogs to UK families each year.

Animal Welfare Minister George Eustice said:

We are a nation of dog lovers but it is crucial that puppies are cared for properly and socialised in the first three months if they are to enjoy healthy and happy lives.

We are aiming to reform the licensing regime we have so that smaller puppy breeding establishments must abide by the same regulations and licensing rules as bigger breeders so that the worst offenders can be dealt with more quickly.

We are also reviewing other animal related licensed activities such as pet sales to address problems associated with the growing trend for internet sales that can contribute to impulse buying.

The consultation will tighten up the licensing regulations for breeders by clarifying existing rules requiring any breeding businesses to have a licence. The proposals will also increase the number of smaller backstreet breeders - who may not consider themselves a business - that will require a licence by making it a requirement for anyone producing three or more litters of puppies in a year.

The consultation also seeks to formalise the adoption of existing [model conditions on good breeding health and welfare](#) by making it a requirement of breeders to comply with the conditions and for local authorities to use them.

Claire Horton, CEO of Battersea Dogs & Cats Home and non-executive Director of AHWBE, said:
Battersea Dogs & Cats Home has long recognised the cruel problem of backstreet breeding in Britain. The government's proposals are extremely encouraging, having listened to the important calls we have made in our nationwide campaign to end this unacceptable practice. Reducing the number of litters a breeder can produce in a year, without a licence, will ensure that more breeders will be brought under the scope of regulation, which we believe will protect the lives and welfare of more of the vulnerable dogs who really need it. It will also provide greater protection for buyers – those looking to take on a dog deserve to be confident that their puppy has been given the best start in life, and bred by a responsible, properly-regulated breeder.

Local authorities will also be able to better target their enforcement activity by directing less resource at responsible businesses, for example those who are controlled by the Kennel Club's UKAS-accredited Assured Breeders' Scheme - which has 6,000 members. This will free up resources to follow-up on reports of poor welfare at backstreet breeding establishments.

For the first time, the consultation will also clarify that online retailers selling puppies should be treated in the same way as high street pet shops by local authorities – meaning they must abide by the same licensing and welfare regulations.

Through the Pet Advisory Action Group (PAAG) – Defra and welfare charities have worked with six major online advertising sites to remove over 130,000 inappropriate adverts of pets where there were concerns about the welfare and background of the animal.

PAAG is now looking at broadening this successful approach to other sites, and to educate prospective buyers to what they should be looking out for if they are looking for a pet online, such as if can they visit and see the dog with its mother before they buy and check that the seller is a properly licensed breeder.

'DEFRA and Pet Advertising Advisory Group Move to Stamp out Rogue Online Pet Adverts', Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG), 26 March 2015

Over 130,000 inappropriate adverts selling pets have been removed from different websites thanks to a set of agreed standards for online pet advertising.

The sector-led standards were agreed by members of the Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG) and aim to educate website operators and the public about what they can do to help stop the misleading or illegal trade in pets and imported animals.

Signatories to the standards, agreed in 2013, include leading websites Preloved, Pets4Homes, and Friday Media Group.

The group, which is chaired by Dogs Trust, has regular meetings with Defra.

Examples of changes websites have made recently to improve standards are:

- The removal of adverts for illegal animals such as dogs banned under Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act;
- The removal of adverts for non-human primates; and
- The removal of adverts for pregnant animals.

Animal Welfare Minister Lord de Mauley said:

“I congratulate the Pet Advertising Advisory Group for their hard work in devising these standards, and the websites involved for working together to implement them. I am pleased that so many misleading adverts have been removed from view. I urge the public to pay close attention to the health and welfare of advertised pets, and ask all websites involved in selling domestic pets to sign up to this voluntary code.”

PAAG Spokesperson Margaret Donnellan said: “PAAG is delighted to see the progress made by the classified websites who have committed to implementing the minimum standards. It is clear from the number of unscrupulous adverts blocked over the past twelve months that sites truly can improve their pet sections through proper commitment to animal welfare, and we would urge other classified sites in the UK to follow the committed sites' example.

“Although a lot has been done, we all acknowledge that there is more to do, and we hope that continued engagement will ultimately help to make the internet a safer place for pets and those looking to purchase a pet.”

The standards state that websites must undertake certain actions before advertising domestic pets. For example, PAAG signatory websites have committed to:

- Running automated checks for 'blacklisted' words/terms such as banned breeds and filtering out inappropriate or illegal adverts for 'dangerous' animals.
- Requiring all vendors to display a recent photograph and the age of the animal that they are advertising, so that any welfare issues can be identified.

- Label clearly each pet advert to show whether it is a private sale, a commercial sale or from a rescue/rehoming centre.

The full list of the [minimum standards](#) is published on the PAAG website.

4. Parliamentary material

4.1 Parliamentary questions

Dogs: Sales

Asked by: Dr Lisa Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to ban the online sale of puppies; and if she will make a statement.

Answered by: George Eustice Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Defra is currently consulting on proposals to modernise the licensing of animal related activities including the regulation of pet shops. The consultation includes a proposal to clarify that those trading pets commercially on-line should be licensed.

HC Deb 19 January 2016 | PQ 22460

Dogs: Smuggling

Asked by: Alex Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to the findings of the report by the Dogs Trust entitled, Puppy Smuggling, the Scandal Continues, published in July 2015, what steps her Department is taking to tackle the reasons for the illegal landing of puppies for commercial sale identified in that report.

Answered by: George Eustice Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs : The Dogs Trust's report highlights that responsibility for stopping the illegal movement of puppies begins in the country where they are born. The UK Chief Veterinary Officer has written to the authorities in the countries highlighted in the report to remind them of their duty to ensure that the requirements of the EU pet travel scheme must be fully complied with. This approach has previously resulted in investigations in EU Member States and appropriate action being taken, including the suspension of veterinarian licenses. We will continue to alert the authorities in any Member State where we become aware of issues in relation to the operation of the pet travel scheme.

The UK carries out more checks on pets at the border than most other EU Member States and stringent penalties are in place where people are found to be breaking the rules. Defra actively shares intelligence it gathers relating to abuse of the pet travel scheme with Local Authorities (who are enforcement

bodies) and other EU countries for them to further investigate and take any necessary action.

The illegal trade is ultimately driven by demand for cheap, pedigree puppies and so we have published guidance on the steps pet owners can take to avoid buying an illegally imported pet. See: <https://www.gov.uk/buying-a-cat-or-dog>. Defra has also worked closely with the Pet Advertising Advisory Group to drive up standards for online advertisements.

HC Deb 15 January 2016 | PQ 21392

- *Dogs: Sales*

Asked by: Richard Arkless: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will seek a ban on the sale of puppies from retail outlets; and if she will make a statement.

Answered by: George Eustice Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Under the Pet Animals Act 1951 local authorities can already apply conditions to individual pet shop licences. This includes, for example, restricting the species that can be sold. The power to apply conditions to an individual licence is in section 1(3) of the 1951 Act and is intended to help secure the welfare requirements set out in that section.

HC Deb 16 December 2015 | PQ 19822

Dogs: Smuggling

Asked by: Daniel Zeichner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the efficacy of existing legislation to stop the illegal importation of puppies into the UK.

Answered by: George Eustice, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Pet animals, including puppies entering the UK, must comply with the requirements of the Pet Travel Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 576/2013). This is enforced, in Great Britain, by the Non-Commercial Movement of Pet Animals Order 2011. Animals, including puppies, entering the UK for sale or rehoming are subject to the provisions of the Council Directive 92/65/EEC (Balai Directive). This is implemented, in Great Britain, by the Trade in Animal and Related Products Regulations 2011.

Both regulations provide for the Secretary of State to carry out a periodic review. Work on the review of the Trade in Animal and Related Products Regulations 2011 is already underway. The review of the Non Commercial Movement of Pet Animals Order 2011 will commence early next year.

HC Deb 15 December 2015 | PQ 19386

4.2 Debates

[House of Commons Debate](#) on the **regulation of the sale of puppies and kittens**
4 Sep 2014

MPs debated the following motion:

"That this House has considered the e-petition relating to the sale of young puppies and kittens; notes that puppies produced at large-scale commercial breeding establishments, known as puppy farms, and irresponsibly-bred kittens are separated from their mothers too early and often transported long distances, and as a result often suffer serious life-threatening problems including impaired immune systems, poor socialisation, infectious diseases and shorter life spans; calls on the Government to review existing legislation to ensure that it is consistent with its own guidance that prospective owners should always see the puppy or kitten with its mother, and to ban the sale of puppies and kittens from retail centres such as pet shops, garden centres or puppy supermarkets; further notes the support of the Blue Cross, Dog Rescue Federation, Dogs Advisory Council, Dogs Trust, The Kennel Club, RSPCA and others for such a ban; and further calls on the Government and welfare organisations to work together to raise awareness among the public about choosing a dog responsibly from only ethical breeders or by adoption from legitimate rescue organisations, and to consider further steps to end the cruel practice of irresponsible and unethical breeding of puppies and kittens in the UK."

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/backbench-business-committee/news/mps-debate-regulation-of-the-sale-of-puppies-and-kittens/>

4.3 Early Day Motions

[EDM 1172 Sale of Pets in the UK](#) 1 March 2016 Alan Meale MP:

That this House is seriously concerned about the practice of animals being advertised as potential pets on UK websites, including on Gumtree, Preloved and others on which the advertisements include offers of free to good homes; believes such exploitation of animals is not in their best interests, nor is it acceptable practice in today's modern world; and calls on the Government to introduce measures to immediately halt such advertisements and further to find ways of setting minimum purchase pricing and welfare standards guidelines for all connected with the sale of pets in the UK.

4.4 Petition to Parliament

[Petition](#): To stop pet shops selling puppies in store and keeping a 'stock' of puppies.
(and Defra response).

Created by Vikki Novelle Deadline for petition expiry is 8 April 2016 (six months).

When buying a puppy from a pet shop from 'stock' the buyer is unaware of the ancestry, health issues, how often the bitch is bred from and the conditions the parents are kept in to provide the stock. People might buy a puppy on impulse or to 'save' it. What happens to puppies that aren't sold?

5. Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs consultation on review of animal establishments licensing in England

Overview

Local authorities are required by law to issue licences for specific animal-related establishments and activities, with the aim of maintaining good standards of animal welfare. There is a registration requirement for performing animals, and licensing systems for pet shops, animal boarding, riding establishments and dog breeding.

We estimate that there are approximately 2,300 licensed pet shops, 650 licensed dog breeders, 1,800 licensed riding establishments, and 6,300 licensed animal boarding establishments in England. These comprise the fourth largest group of business licences issued by local authorities, after premises, taxi, and gambling licences.

There is a strong public expectation that animal welfare standards will be robustly enforced by local authorities. However, the laws, and their specific requirements, are often decades old, and difficult to adapt to the changing types of animal-related businesses, and to new standards of good practice in animal welfare. Moreover, the current process is complex and burdensome for both businesses and local authorities. For instance, primary legislation limits licences to a calendar-year framework, arbitrarily focussing inspections at the end of the year, and forcing some businesses with multiple functions to have as many as three separate licences.

As part of its commitment to Better Regulation, Defra is conducting a cross-cutting review of licences and permits. The Government is committed to improving the effectiveness of existing regulation whilst lifting the regulatory burdens on businesses to support growth. This consultation sits within that wider review and aims to relieve the administrative burden on local authorities, simplify the application and inspection process for businesses, as well as maintain and improve existing animal welfare standards by modernising the current animal licensing system in England.

Why We Are Consulting

This consultation seeks views on a number of proposed changes to the animal establishment licensing system.

We are proposing to introduce new secondary legislation under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. This would introduce a single 'Animal Establishment Licence' for animal boarding establishments, pet shops, riding establishments, and dog breeding. We want to know what you think about these proposed changes.

The consultation will run from the 20th December 2015 until the 12th March 2016.

Related Documents

- [Consultation Letter - Review of Animal Establishments Licensing in England](#), 118.4 kB (PDF document)
- [Consultation Document - Review of Animal Establishments Licensing in England](#), 283.7 kB (PDF document)

6. Useful links and further reading

RSPCA, [Sold a Pup? Exposing the breeding, trade and sale of puppies](https://view.pagetiger.com/RSPCAPuppyTradeReport), February 2016
<https://view.pagetiger.com/RSPCAPuppyTradeReport>

Defra, [Consultation on the review of animal establishments licensing in England](https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-health-and-welfare/consultation-on-the-review-of-animal-licensing), December 2015
<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-health-and-welfare/consultation-on-the-review-of-animal-licensing>

The Dogs Trust, [The Puppy Smuggling Scandal: An Investigation into the Illegal Entry of Dogs into Great Britain under the Pet Travel Scheme](https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/whats-happening/issues-campaigns/puppy-smuggling/the-scandal), 16 November 2015
<https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/whats-happening/issues-campaigns/puppy-smuggling/the-scandal>

Battersea Dogs and Cats Home, [Licensed Dog Breeding in Great Britain: Battersea Breeding Report 2015](http://www.battersea.org.uk/apex/webarticle?pagelid=endbackstreetbreeding)
<http://www.battersea.org.uk/apex/webarticle?pagelid=endbackstreetbreeding>

House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee: sub-committee current Inquiry on **Animal welfare: Domestic pets**
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environment-food-and-rural-affairs-committee/environment-food-and-rural-affairs-sub-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/animal-welfare-domestic-15-16/>

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Sub-Committee is holding a series of short inquiries on animal welfare over the course of this Parliament. The first inquiry focuses on domestic pets, including cats, dogs and horses. The Committee intends to consider issues surrounding exotic pets at a later date.

House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee, [Dog Control and Welfare: Seventh Report of Session 2012–13](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environment-food-and-rural-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/dog-control-and-welfare/), 6 February 2013
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environment-food-and-rural-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/dog-control-and-welfare/>

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