

PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Charity fund for pets exploited for profit opens for applications

Animal welfare charity, Naturewatch Foundation, is encouraging animal rescues in the UK to apply for their 2025 Pet Rescue Grant, which opens for applications on Friday 24th January.

The fund is designed to help rescuers support dogs, cats and rabbits who have been impacted by the UK's low-welfare and illegal pet trade. Thousands of animals are affected each year by practices such as illegal puppy farming, unlicensed backyard breeding and the reckless sale of pets.

Eligible UK charities and community interest companies (CICs) can apply for a grant of up to £10,000 to aid in the rescue and rehabilitation of animals exploited for profit. This year, for the first time, a mini-grant of up to £1,000 is also available to unincorporated charities and voluntary organisations carrying out vital animal welfare work in their local community.

In 2024, the Pet Rescue Grant provided vital support to Bliss Cavalier Rescue, Axholme Cat Rescue and Rabbit Residence Rescue. They used the funding to assist dogs, cats and rabbits impacted by puppy farming, harmful designer breeding trends and irresponsible pet selling.

Natale Harney, Campaign Manager at Naturewatch Foundation said, "The Pet Rescue Grant is about more than just funding; it's about helping to give exploited animals a second chance. Although we're a small charity ourselves, we're proud to support the incredible work of rescues across the UK, especially during challenging times when demand for animal welfare services is higher than ever."

Naturewatch Foundation campaigns for stronger pet welfare protections and investigates public tip-offs about the illegal pet trade in the UK. Now in its second year, applications for the Pet Rescue Grant open at a time when many UK rescues are operating at full capacity as they continue to pick up the pieces from the cost-of-living crisis, Covid-19 puppy boom and XL bully ban.

Rescue organisations that are interested in applying can visit naturewatch.org/petrescuegrant or email petrescuegrant@naturewatch.org to find out more. Applications open on 24th January 2025 and close on 21st February 2025.

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For further information please contact:

Natalie Harney
Campaign Manager, Naturewatch Foundation
petrescuegrant@naturewatch.org
+44 (0) 1242 252 871

About Naturewatch Foundation:

Naturewatch Foundation is a registered animal welfare charity (England & Wales: 1039679) that has been speaking out on behalf of animals across the UK and internationally since 1991. Its work includes campaigning to end the low-welfare pet trade in the UK and investigating suspected illegal breeding and selling of dogs, cats and rabbits.