

## Animal welfare fund launches to help pets exploited for profit

Tuesday 23 January, 2024

**Applications open on January 24<sup>th</sup> for a new Pet Rescue Grant to help dogs, cats and rabbits impacted by illegal breeding and selling in the UK.**

The new grant of £5,000, which is being made available by Naturewatch Foundation, is open to UK charities and community interest companies (CICs) to help support the rescue and rehabilitation of animals who have been affected by the illegal pet trade.

More than half of UK households own a pet, and it's thought as many as 50% of puppies are supplied by illegal sources. Low-welfare breeding has a devastating impact on animal welfare and owners, and the illicit pet trade has increasingly attracted the involvement of organised criminals.

Naturewatch Foundation campaigns for better pet welfare protections and investigates tip-offs from the public about the illegal pet trade. The charity is launching the grant at a time when the animal rescue sector is facing mounting challenges caused by the cost-of-living crisis and rising abandonments.

Natalie Harney from the charity said, "As an animal-loving nation, it's a tragedy that so many of our beloved pets are the product of the illicit pet trade. We've been campaigning and investigating to end illegal breeding for years, but we know that without the rescue sector, many abused and exploited pets simply wouldn't get the loving care and specialist support they deserve. The Pet Rescue Grant is our small way of helping those selfless organisations that pick up the pieces."

Rescue organisations that are interested in applying can visit [naturewatch.org/petrescuegrant](https://naturewatch.org/petrescuegrant) or email [petrescuegrant@naturewatch.org](mailto:petrescuegrant@naturewatch.org) to find out more. Applications open on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 and close on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024.

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ADVANCING ANIMAL WELFARE

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## Company Contact:

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### Naturewatch Foundation

T. +44 (0)1242 252871

E. [info@naturewatch.org](mailto:info@naturewatch.org)

W. <https://www.naturewatch.org>

### **Additional Contact(s):**

Sarah Carr, CEO

[sarah@naturewatch.org](mailto:sarah@naturewatch.org)

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