

## Don't sell puppies in a pandemic!

Wednesday 8 April, 2020

**Animal welfare charity, Naturewatch Foundation, is calling on the websites Gumtree, Pets4Homes and Preloved to remove adverts for puppies and kittens during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.**

The Government has made changes to the law restricting non-essential travel and, as a result, prospective pet owners cannot make the necessary checks and visits to ensure the pet they have seen advertised is healthy.

With the normal gestation period in dogs and cats being around 63 days, Naturewatch Foundation is also urging registered breeders to refrain from breeding dogs and cats during the pandemic, so they aren't left with older animals that will be more difficult to sell after the lockdown is over.

Naturewatch Foundation Chief Executive, Caroline Ruane said:

"Advertising puppies and kittens for pickup during the pandemic is irresponsible. The Government is urging people not to make unnecessary journeys. Many vets have had to close their doors and cannot carry out vaccinations and microchipping. Vaccinations are so important because some animals, such as puppies, can carry and spread infectious diseases, some of which are deadly to animals if left untreated.

A breeder who insists that the puppy is picked up during the pandemic is putting pressure on the buyer to either break the law or forfeit their deposit. By taking this approach, the breeder is risking people's health and safety and may be a puppy farmer. A responsible breeder will keep the puppies loved, safe and socialised in their own homes, and not outdoor kennels, until the Government deems it safe to travel. As a result, we are urging the animal-loving public to contact Gumtree, Pets4Homes and Preloved and ask them to temporarily ban listings of puppies and kittens for sale."

Naturewatch Foundation has campaigned against cruel puppy farming for many years. They have highlighted serious health and behavioural problems evident in some dogs, as a result of thousands of cases of unscrupulous profiteering in puppy peddling. The charity's long-term aim is to reduce the number of unwanted animals that find themselves abandoned at already overflowing, cash-strapped rescue centres.

Animal lovers can take part in the campaign by visiting the Naturewatch Foundation website at [www.naturewatch.org](http://www.naturewatch.org) or directly at <https://naturewatch.good.do/puppiesinapandemic/email-puppy-selling-sites/>

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