ITV star Paul O'Grady supports compulsory microchipping as new law comes into force

Wednesday 6 April, 2016

Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Farming & Animals ::

Scan Me:

On the day the new microchipping law comes into force, Battersea Dogs & Cats Home Ambassador Paul O'Grady is urging pet owners to microchip their dogs, after new Battersea research reveals only one in five lost dogs have an up to date chip, making many stray dogs' chances of being reunited with their owners less likely.

Worrying figures from Local Authorities showed in Battersea's new report *Microchipping Where it Matters Most,* the vast majority of stray dogs (80%) either don't have microchips, or the chips are rendered useless because of out of date contact details.

The world-renowned animal charity collected data from 50 UK Local Authorities which took in 1,154 stray dogs in February 2016, which showed only 45% of those strays had a microchip and the owner's contact details were out of date in more than half of these.

Paul O'Grady, who presents ITV's award-winning Battersea series *Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs*, said: "The thought of one of my dogs being lost is heart-breaking. I've seen first-hand the devastated faces of owners who've come to Battersea, praying their dog may have found its way to one of their three centres. And I've also seen the stray dogs that are afraid and confused, wondering why they're sat in a kennel, and not at home in their beds when their owners can't find them.

"Microchipping is the simplest and fastest way to ensure you can be reunited with your pet if you become separated. A microchip can be read by any vet, rescue centre or Local Authority in the UK, and you can be reunited with your dog within hours.

"You just need to make an appointment and Battersea will chip your dog for free at its centres in London, Brands Hatch and Old Windsor. By law, you must have your dog microchipped by 6 April. So get your dog chipped and save yourself and your dog any heartache."

Battersea cares for over 8,000 animals every year across its three sites in London, Berkshire and Kent and the charity hopes the new microchipping law will lead to many more reunites between dogs and their owners. Battersea, and other animal welfare charities such as Dogs Trust and Blue Cross, are offering the free dog microchipping service at their centres.

Peter Laurie, Battersea's Director of Operations, said: "We thank Paul O'Grady for his tremendous support in spreading the word about the importance of microchipping. Such a small chip can make a huge difference to a dog's life. The new law is a milestone in animal welfare legislation, and is warmly welcomed by Battersea as it will make tracing dog owners much easier, enabling more strays to be reunited with their worried owners more quickly, and irresponsible owners and breeders can be prosecuted more easily."

Lost dogs can be reunited with their owners in just a couple of hours after being brought to a rescue centre like Battersea, their local vet or Local Authority, if they have a microchip. The chip is as small as a grain of rice and can instantly provide the contact details of the owner. Last year, Battersea reunited 542 lost pets with their owners.

If you have lost or found a dog or cat, please visit Battersea's website www.battersea.org.uk to file a report or call the charity's Lost Dogs & Cats Line as soon as possible on 0207 627 9245 - lines are open between 8am and 6pm seven days a week.

For more information on Battersea and responsible dog ownership, please visit www.battersea.org.uk/chipandtagevents

-Ends-

For more information on Battersea's *Microchipping where it Matters Most* report, images, and details of the individual Local Authority microchipping findings please contact 020 7627 9332 or email press@battersea.org.uk

Notes to editors

•In 2015 27% of dogs and 30% of cats arrived at Battersea as strays.

•Only 30% of strays were able to be reunited with their owners in 2015 due to dogs arriving without a microchip or details being out of date.

•Since it was founded, Battersea has rescued, reunited and rehomed over 3.1 million dogs and cats.

•In 2015 the Home cared for over 8000 dogs and cats.

•Battersea cares for an average of 260 dogs and 220 cats across its three centres at any one time.

•There is no time limit on how long an animal can stay at Battersea. The average stay for a dog is 30 days and 22 days for a cat.

•In addition to the site in South West London, the Home also has two other centres based at Old Windsor, Berkshire and Brands Hatch, Kent.

•Battersea Dogs & Cats Home rehomes dogs and cats all over the UK.

•For further information on Battersea Dogs & Cats Home please visit www.battersea.org.uk.

Company Contact:

_

Pressat Wire

E. support[@]pressat.co.uk

View Online

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.wire.pressat.co.uk