Local councils urged to clamp down on cruel puppy farmers

Thursday 13 February, 2020

Animal welfare charity, Naturewatch Foundation, is urging local councils to take action immediately against cruel and illegal puppy farming.

Around 400,000 farmed puppies are still sold to the British public every year, and increasingly online. Dog loving families are often duped by puppy farmers into buying puppies which carry disease and are under-socialised, leading to unexpected, and often substantial, vet bills' and behavioural issues, unforeseen by their new owners. Families are sometimes left heartbroken.

Sadly, puppy farming is widespread in the UK. A puppy farm is where lots of dogs are continually bred and puppies sold, ignoring their health in order to maintain low overheads and maximise profits.

Puppy farmers are very different to reputable dog breeders. In response to public outcry about puppy farming, the government has introduced 'Lucy's Law', meaning that only someone who has bred a puppy is allowed to sell it. The new law comes into force in April 2020, and is to be enforced by local councils.

Naturewatch Foundation Campaign Manager, Sarah Carr, explains:

"Local councils license dog breeders in their area. Anyone breeding more than three litters a year needs a dog breeding licence. Criminals, and people who just want to make money out of breeding dogs, will often ignore the law. Only a handful of local councils publish their list of inspected dog breeders on their council website - *we want all councils to do so*. This should help families avoid being conned by puppy farmers."

Anyone interested in contacting their local council about puppy farming can use Naturewatch Foundation's online campaigning tool https://naturewatch.good.do/puppyfarmingemailyourcouncil/stampitout/

In their campaigning on behalf of dogs, Naturewatch Foundation also hopes to promote the 'adopt, don't shop' message to encourage potential dog owners to first think about visiting animal rescue shelters when searching for a puppy or dog.

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