



Northamptonshire County Council

Advice on buying a puppy

Increasing numbers of puppies are being imported illegally in to the UK from puppy farms across Europe. These puppies are being sold via adverts on the internet and in newspaper small ads. These puppies are accompanied by incomplete, false and forged documentation which lead buyers to believe they have been imported legally or bred in the UK.

The UK is a Rabies free country and the rules and regulations surrounding animal imports are in place to protect this rabies free status. Puppies are being smuggled into the UK without first having been vaccinated against rabies or they have been given the vaccination too young therefore making it ineffective.

Puppies are normally discovered by UK vets after they are taken for their first check up. If UK vets have any doubt about the legality of importation paperwork or if the microchip originates outside of the UK, they have a legal obligation to report this to the local Trading Standards Service to be investigated.

If found to have been illegally imported, the puppy WILL be taken into quarantine and the fees must be paid by the owners of the puppy, not the seller.

These fees could be in excess of £1000.

Top tips to remember when buying a puppy

- Be suspicious if the seller cannot show you the puppy with its mother and litter mates. View the puppy where it was bred.
- Get as much information about where the puppy has come from and beware if the seller is from outside the UK.
- If the puppy has been vaccinated (**MUST** be 3 months old for Rabies) ask to see the documentation. This must clearly state the veterinary practice where this was carried out. Be suspicious if the address of the veterinary practice is outside the UK.
- If the seller informs you that the puppy has been brought in from another country it should have a pet passport **with a valid rabies vaccination recorded in it. The date of import must be at least 21 days after the date of rabies vaccination.**
- **NEVER** agree to have the puppy delivered to your home address or to meet the seller to collect the puppy. If the seller wants you to do this be very suspicious.
- **NEVER** pay for the puppy in advance.



If you have any doubts about a puppy you have purchased contact your vet.

If you suspect a puppy you have bought may have come from abroad and does not have a Pet Passport it may be in contravention of UK rabies legislation.

Report it to Northamptonshire County Council via the Consumer Advice consumer service on 03454 040506 or by visiting www.adviceguide.org.uk



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