

# Factfile



## The puppy trade

Buying a puppy, without knowing exactly where he comes from, can be a disaster – for the family and the young animal.

OneKind surveys show that there are relatively few licensed breeders compared with the number of puppies coming onto the market. Some so-called domestic breeders evade licensing rules by passing off their commercial business as a hobby.

People also unknowingly buy puppies from puppy farms in the UK and Ireland, where dogs live in filthy, overcrowded conditions. Parasites such as fleas, worms and mange mites, and infections such as parvovirus, gastroenteritis and distemper – all of which can kill – are prevalent. Inbreeding increases the rate of inherited disease which can strike early or late in life.

Bitches have too many litters and start too young. They are often in poor physical condition, and poorly fed – but they are never seen.

Their puppies end up being sold out of car boots in lay-bys and car parks while others go to rearing establishments (legal in Scotland) for re-sale. And now, thousands of puppies are sold on the internet which is virtually unregulated.

Young animals traded like this can suffer disease and parasitic infection, made worse by the stress of travel and being separated from their mothers. Families taking on a sickly, frightened or unsocialised puppy incur large veterinary costs.

But sometimes, even then, a much-loved young pet does not survive.

### What can you do?

- If you are looking for a family pet, visit a shelter and choose one of the lovely dogs waiting for a home
- If you must buy a puppy, make sure you see him with his mother
- NEVER buy on the street or allow a puppy to be delivered to you
- NEVER buy a puppy from the internet unless from a reputable re-homing charity
- Support OneKind in lobbying for a full-scale overhaul of the pet breeding and vending laws which are severely out of date
- Make a regular donation to support OneKind campaigns