



**Isle of Man**  
Government

*Reilrys Ellan Vannin*

# Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture

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## Agricultural Directorate

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## GENERAL ADVICE ON THE PURCHASE OF PUPPIES

The Department understands the public concerns around the purchasing of puppies that turn out to have problems, be that health issues leading to excessive cost, or behavioural issues towards other dogs, or indeed humans.

Minister, Phil Gawne comments: I take some comfort in the fact that there are controls on the breeding of dogs and cats on the Island and that there are no individuals breeding large numbers of puppies indiscriminately here; while the current legislation will be improved and modernised in due course, through the proposed Animal Welfare Bill\*, we would not be able to ban the importation of puppies for onward sale. Problems that arise following buying a pet is also a matter for Trading Standards, through the sale of Goods Act. Purchasers should be both informed and careful when buying their future pet companion. The Chief Vet has provided some extended information on this matter"

Chief Veterinary Officer, Stuart Jaques MRCVS states:

"The very best advice that can be given is for prospective owners to always 'see the puppy with its mother and litter mates'. This enables prospective purchasers to judge the conditions in which the puppy is kept, the behavioural predisposition of the mother and the socialisation of the puppy and the litter mates. Additionally, this gives the opportunity for prospective purchasers to discuss any health scheme tests that may have been carried out on the dam and sire before breeding. Buying a puppy "sight unseen" is not advisable - unless you know the breeder concerned and have a solid previous relationship with them.

In addition, it would be very prudent to consider:

- how large the dog will be when fully grown;
- your ability to provide sufficient regular (daily) exercise for the chosen breed;
- whether the home accommodation is big enough for the time the dog likely spends alone;
- the costs of neutering, vaccinating and feeding the chosen breed or cross breed;
- whether the parents have been tested for known inherited problems for that particular breed (and see the certified results);
- some knowledge, through research, on the breed characteristics and any known health trends within the breed."

While the above will not ensure every purchase is completely risk free, it will seriously reduce the chances of problems occurring. Such actions would also greatly reduce the business of "puppy farmers" compared to responsible breeders.

### NOTES:

\*An Animal Welfare Bill is currently in early process, which will provide for additional powers to further enhance the welfare of pet and other leisure animals.

Further very useful information on the purchasing of puppies can be found at:  
<http://puppycontract.rspca.org.uk/endorsedby> - a document which is endorsed by the British Veterinary Association, PDSA and others.

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