# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | **Consultation to be launched on Third Party Sales of Puppies and Kittens** |
| **DATE** | **19 February 2019** |
| **BY** | **Lesley Griffiths AM, Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs** |

High standards of animal welfare are a priority of the Welsh Government. The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework sets out our plan for continuing and lasting improvements in standards of animal health and welfare for kept animals.

Currently, puppies and kittens can either be purchased directly from a breeder (licensed or unlicensed depending on whether they are covered by the breeding regulations), via a third-party seller, or from a rescue/rehoming centre.

There are concerns commercial third-party sales of puppies and kittens may be associated with poorer welfare conditions for the animals compared to when people buy directly from the breeder. For example, this might include the introduction to several new and unfamiliar environments and the increased likelihood of multiple journeys the puppies or kittens have to undertake. All of these have the potential to contribute to an increased risk of disease and a lack of socialisation and habituation for the puppies and kittens.

On 19 June, I delivered an Oral Statement announcing my commitment to explore options of banning commercial third party sales of puppies and kittens in Wales.

[Today, I will launch a consultation to gather information on the supply chain of puppies and kittens and help identify where Government intervention will have the greatest impact.](https://beta.gov.wales/third-party-sales-puppies-and-kittens) It will run until 17th May 2019.

Officials will continue to engage with industry representatives and welfare organisations to ensure any change is managed to mitigate possible risks identified during the consultation process.

The vast majority of those buying a new puppy or kitten do so with the best of intentions. However, it is not always immediately apparent to the buyer where their new pet originated, or in what conditions it was raised. This consultation is an opportunity to gather as much information as possible to enable us to make lasting improvements to the welfare of puppies and kittens bred in Wales. Banning commercial third party sales of puppies and kittens may only be one aspect of this.

Any proposed changes to policy or legislation as a result of this initial exercise will be subject to a full impact assessment and further consultation.