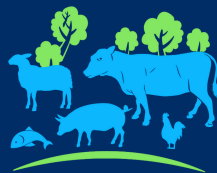


Pet Abduction Bill



Conservative
Animal Welfare
Foundation



What is the *Pet Abduction Bill*?

The Pet Abduction Bill is a Private Members Bill led by Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation Patron Anna Firth MP. It will make dog and cat abduction a specific offence, and make provisions against the abduction of other animals commonly kept as pets (such as ferrets). By passing this legislation, we can address the growing problem of pet theft and deliver part of Defra's Action Plan for Animal Welfare (2021).

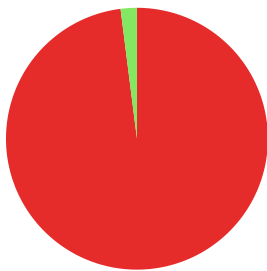
The UK is a nation of animal lovers, and our pets provide an important source of companionship and a comfort in good times and bad. Polling shows 95% of the British public regard their pets as part of the family, and it is therefore unacceptable that the theft of a pet is currently treated no more seriously than that of a mobile phone. In essence, cats and dogs are merely personal property under the law.

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Many of us may have personal experience of pet theft, or know someone who does. It is incredibly emotionally distressing, yet there is little under the law to deter criminals who would seek to profit from the sale of a stolen pet. Strengthening the law to make pet theft an offence will provide an effective deterrent to those who might consider pet abduction a low-risk, high-reward crime.

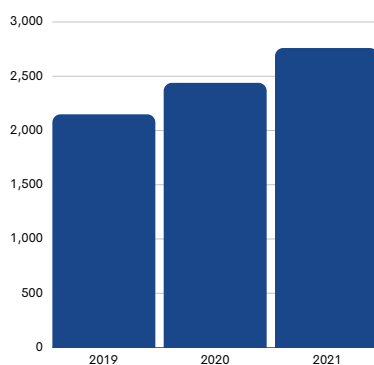
This legislation will also enable better tracking and data collection on pet abduction cases. This will provide local authorities and law enforcement with insights into the scale of the problem and help tailor future preventive measures.

According to the Kennel Club in 2021, a staggering 98 per cent of dog theft criminals are never charged, and in more than half of cases a suspect is never identified



98% of dog theft criminals are never charged

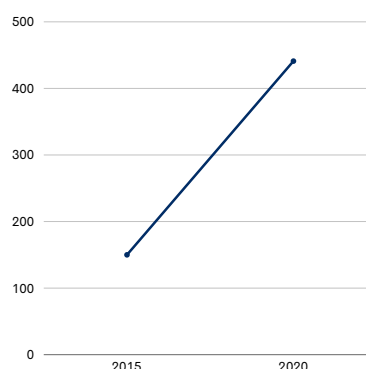
A report by Direct Line Pet Insurance in 2022 found that 2,760 dogs were stolen in 2021, the equivalent of nearly eight dogs every day. This total figure is 321 more than in 2020 and 611 more than in 2019.



Nearly eight dogs every day were stolen in 2021

According to the UK Pet Theft Taskforce responses to FOI requests made to UK police forces showed that recorded cat theft crime -in the forces that responded- increased from 150 recorded cat thefts in 2015 to 441 cat thefts in 2020.

Recorded cat thefts increased by approximately 194% in five years





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