

SHG Press Release

RSPCA Inspectors empowered to hand out fixed penalty notices of £80 or £100 will decimate pet keeping

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

15th October 2006

The Self Help Group for Farmers, Pet Owners and Others experiencing difficulties with the RSPCA (The SHG) is appalled at the possibility of RSPCA Inspectors being empowered under clause 15 of the Police and Justice Bill to hand out fixed-penalty notices of £80 or £100.

This news comes as at least one local authority (Luton) is considering cutting its dog warden service due to lack of funding and as the Animal Welfare Bill (AWB) is about to go to Report stage.

The SHG believes that despite Government claims, it is clear that there will be no new money for local authorities under the AWB and that the RSPCA will become the default Inspectors.

Animal keepers will be utterly powerless to protect their pets when faced with an Inspector who will have, in addition to sweeping powers granted to him under the new AWB, the right to issue an on the spot fine to anyone whose behaviour he thinks is threatening or anti-social.

Any animal keeper who dares to get upset if an RSPCA inspector criticises the care he has provided for his animal, or because the inspector intends to remove his animal is going to be at risk of such a penalty.

Said Anne Kasica of the SHG: "With Legal Aid being cut to the bone it is going to be impossible for people to go to court to clear their names. It will be cheaper for the innocent to simply pay the fine."

"We will see people giving up keeping pets in their droves as they realise just what sweeping powers to control animal keeping have been granted to unaccountable charity workers."

Notes to Editors: -

References

Council workers may get right to impose on-the-spot fines - Sunday Times

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-2404676,00.html>

Luton-on-Sunday: Dog warden service may see cash cuts bite

<http://tinyurl.com/svdae>

For further comment please contact Anne Kasica on 01559 371031 or Ernest Vine on 01559 370566. Mobile 07719 367148. e-mail: shg@the-shg.org

The SHG was officially formed in June 1990 and has been helping people to defend themselves and their animals from the RSPCA ever since. The national help line number is **08700 72 66 89**

Background information on the Self Help Group for Farmers Pet Owners and Other Experiencing Difficulties with the RSPCA can be found at <http://www.the-shg.org>

Details of further criticisms of the RSPCA can be found at the RSPCA-Animadversion website:

<http://cheetah.webtribe.net/~animadversion>

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