



Dog Fighting

Advice for rescue centres



Dog fighting remains a significant animal welfare issue in the UK. It's one of the most horrific forms of animal cruelty, not only for the violence the dogs endure during fights but for the trauma they suffer throughout their lives. Training methods brutalise, and fights inflict untold physical and mental suffering on 'man's best friend'.

This advice sheet will help you spot dog fighting and report it. It also provides information about how to apply to the League Against Cruel Sports for financial help towards the cost of caring for a dog that's been involved in dog fighting.

Funding of up to £500 available – see over for details

- Marks around the neck may indicate that a weighted collar has been used to build muscle.
- Fearful behaviour, the dog may be unsocialised and nervous of unfamiliar places and sounds and may be reluctant to walk on a lead.
- Significant aggression towards other dogs.

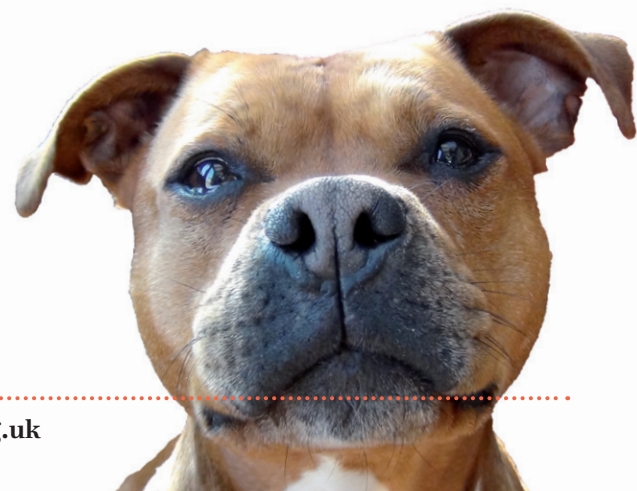
Not only do these animals suffer terribly during fights but, by the time they've reached a rescue centre, they may be in very poor condition with multiple puncture wounds, crushing injuries, fractures, swellings, infections, dehydration and shock.

It's important to note that it's rare for these dogs to be aggressive towards people because they're specifically selected to be non-aggressive to their handlers even when they're under great stress during fights with significant, possibly life threatening, injuries.

As with other forms of animal abuse, one of the most significant indicators that the injuries result from dog fighting is that they're inconsistent with

Warning Signs

- Multiple puncture wounds in various stages of healing which suggest the injuries have happened over time, on separate occasions.
- Wounds are to the head, neck, chest, and forelimbs; the front legs may show bite marks encircling the leg.
- Gums may be damaged, missing or swollen.
- New, as well as healed, fractures.
- Injuries to ears or signs of crude cropping.
- Broken, filed or lost teeth.
- White marks on the fur may indicate scarring underneath.



the explanation provided. Typically, the explanation offered is that the injuries result from a 'spontaneous dog fight in the local park'. Ask probing questions about the dog and its circumstances to ensure you have as much information as possible.

Funding of up to £500 available to help care for dogs

We appreciate that caring for these dogs can be expensive as they often have higher veterinary bills, need more behavioural support and take longer to rehome.

The League offers a one-off payment of up to £500 as a contribution to help with these costs. In return, we'd like to use a brief summary of the information you provide to help raise awareness of dog fighting. By working together, we can do so much more to tackle this horrendous abuse. To apply, you'll need to complete an application form and show why you think the dog in your care has been involved in dog fighting. Full details of the scheme and how to apply are on our website www.league.org.uk/funding-for-rescue-dogs

Raising awareness of your concerns

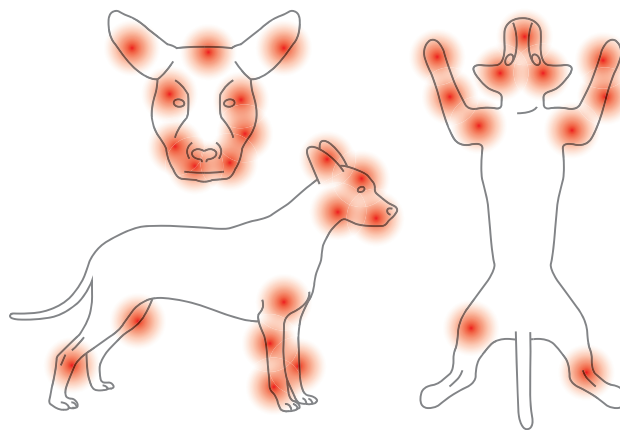
It's an offence under section 8 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (England and Wales), Welfare of Animals Act 2011 (Northern Ireland) and the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2006 (Scotland) to force animals to fight. It's an offence to attend, supply, publish or possess a video of a fight. It's also an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to an animal.

More information

There are a range of resources on our website that you can use to help raise awareness of dog fighting amongst local police and vets.

Raise your concerns today - help us #EndDogFighting

Typical wound patterns



Typical dog fighting injuries



Confidentiality

You can report your concerns about dog fighting in your area confidentially to the League Against Cruel Sports via our online Animal Crimewatch or by telephone on 01483 361 108 or by email to crimewatch@league.org.uk. Our professionally trained investigators will take a close look at what's happening, liaise with the police and other animal welfare organisations as appropriate, and we'll let you know the outcome of our investigations.

We will not reveal your identity or the name of your rescue centre; the information you provide is strictly confidential. For more information please visit www.league.org.uk/animal-crimewatch