

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021, [Plenary 23 March 2021](#)

Diolch, Llywydd. I move the motion.

I would like to briefly explain the background to today's debate on the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Wales) Regulations 2021. Firstly, the Pet Animals Act 1951 section 1(1) will cease to have effect in relation to Wales and will be replaced by these regulations. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, the regulations make it an offence to sell a puppy or kitten that the seller has not bred themselves on the premises. I first committed to investigate the banning of commercial third-party sales of puppies and kittens in June 2018. It has been a long journey, but along the way, we've also taken other actions to strengthen the ability of local authorities across Wales to enforce existing regulations, as well as these new regulations.

These regulations are yet another step towards ensuring the welfare of puppies and kittens currently being bred and sold onto third parties. Their welfare improves significantly by being sold only by breeders directly to the new owner. At present, commercial third parties are able to sell puppies and kittens, which means, in most cases, purchasers will not see the puppy or kitten interacting with the mother or siblings. They may also have had to endure a number of journeys before reaching their new home.

The regulations being made today will come fully into force on 10 September. During this time, statutory guidance will be co-produced to support enforcement by local authorities, and this timeline will also allow existing sellers affected to make changes and consider a different operating model to mitigate any potential impact. I would like to make it clear that statutory guidance for enforcement officers will provide local authority officers the flexibility they require to enforce the licensing regime, which steers away from a one-size-fits-all approach.

We are bringing in regulations that close loopholes, creating discretion on enforcement to work with key organisations involved in either rehoming or rescue activities. They provide local authorities with a channel to assess whether the animals are being used purely for financial gain via the business test, and aim to improve animal welfare, supporting informed decision making by the purchasing public. I commend the motion to the Senedd. Diolch.