



[Some of the dogs]

Sep 11, 2020 16:41 BST

## Advice to pet owners after dogs recovered in Orpington

**Police urge dog owners to ensure pets are microchipped following recent recovery of missing dogs.**

In the early hours of Wednesday, 9 September, officers from the Met's South Area BCU recovered 24 dogs from a site in Orpington following an early morning warrant.

An additional 25 dogs have since been seized from the site during ongoing searches.

Officers now believe that some of these dogs have been stolen and are looking to reunite them with their rightful owners, however this is proving difficult as most of the dogs have not been microchipped, meaning officers are not able to contact the owners.

Officers also suspect they have uncovered an unlicensed puppy breeding operating at the site. Police are working closely with Bromley Council who have started an investigation into offences under breeding regulations.

**Inspector Paddy O'Hara, from the Met's Dog Unit, said:** "It's really important for dog owners to microchip their dogs, so that if, in the unfortunate circumstance, they are stolen, we can return them to you as quickly as possible if they are recovered."

On Thursday, 10 September, an appeal issued across Bromley MPS social media accounts to reunite these dogs with owners reached almost one million people - the post also highlighted the importance of ensuring dogs are microchipped.

One of the dogs has since been reunited with its owner after being missing for six months.

**Insp O'Hara, added:** "We are urging dog owners to ensure their pets are microchipped to help alleviate unnecessary strain on animal charities and local authorities, and to protect the welfare of dogs by promoting responsible ownership.

"A microchip is a small electronic chip, around the size of a grain of rice, which is implanted under the dog's skin and contains a unique number that can be read by a scanner.

"Your contact details relating to each number are logged on a central database, so should your dog ever go missing or be stolen it can be scanned by the authorities and returned to its owner swiftly and safely."

In line with government legislation, it is a legal requirement to ensure your dog is microchipped by the time it is eight weeks old - not doing so could lead to a fine of up to £500.

Owners are able to get their dog microchipped for free at any of the 18 Dogs Trust centres across the UK, and free microchips are available at most veterinary surgeries.

We would also urge potential puppy buyers to check the credibility of their breeders prior to purchasing. It is important to do your research so you know your new pet has come from a responsible seller.

If you are buying a dog from a breeder, start by checking that the breeder is a member of the Kennel Club's Assured Breeder Scheme or look for a commercial dog breeder, whose licence number must be shown in any advert. You can check with the local authority that these details are legitimate.

If your dog is missing and you recognise one of the pets pictured above, please call 101 or contact us via Twitter @MetCC, quoting Op Medusa.

During ongoing searches of the site, officers also seized a number of other animals on welfare grounds, including 45 chickens, a pony, four gold finches and several cats and kittens.

---

We aim to make London the safest global city;  
Be the best crime-fighters, by any measure;  
Earn the trust and confidence of every community;  
Take pride in the quality of our service;  
So people love, respect and are proud of London's Met