All-Party Parliamentary Group Releases Report on Dog Attacks on Livestock

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare has revealed an increase in dog attacks on livestock which is costing farmers millions of pounds and causing great distress.

In a ground breaking report released today, November 16 2017, the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare) has released new data on dog attacks on livestock which shows the growing problem of incidences of livestock worrying by dogs and identifies some of the causes.

APGAW has made a number of recommendations aimed at reducing dog attacks on livestock and other animals.

Members of the group including chair Angela Smith MP, Lord de Mauley, an ex DEFRA minister and Neil Parish, Chair of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee said:

"Most dog owners are responsible and we want to encourage dog walking, but actually the report shows most attacks are caused by unaccompanied dogs. The Group feels more needs to be done to educate owners of the risks of dog attacks, we need better recording by police forces and better advice needs to be available for farmers to use preventative tools and take low cost litigation against irresponsible dog owners who are costing their industry. "

The APGAW report has recommended that more is done to ensure dog owners recognise the risk their dog may pose to other animals so they can take measures to prevent incidents such as ensuring dogs cannot escape from the home, using the lead where needed, looking out for signs warning of grazing livestock and attending training classes.

Some of the other significant recommendations were:

• Farmers and local authorities can take measures to help prevent worrying and attacks. The information around the need to report, how to utilise preventative tools and how to set out clear messaging needs to be delivered consistently to farmers and given authority by farming and landowner organisations.
• Farmers should report all attacks and worrying to the police.
• Dog organisations should produce consistent information for dog owners which can be disseminated through veterinary practices and farming organisations.
• The Home Office should recognize that livestock worrying is a national social and economic issue which requires accurate statistics to be collected and guidance to be provided to police and should look to make livestock worrying a recordable crime to ensure more accurate records.
• Defra should support specific updates to relevant legislation where this is found to be required such as a better definition of ‘livestock’
• The Ministry of Justice should review the sentencing under the Dogs (Prevention of Livestock) Act 1953
• All organisations and institutions should look at commissioning research on the root causes of poor dog behaviour.

Ends

The APGAW report was overseen by a sub-group comprised of; Angela Smith MP, Lord de Mauley, Lord Trees, Neil Parish MP, Rebecca Pow MP, David Hanson MP, Liz Saville-Roberts MP and Henry Smith MP.

If you have any questions, please do contact Marisa Heath, on admin@apgaw.org or 0776 424 7098.