



**PRESS RELEASE, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

## **Vets call for tougher fireworks laws after dogs seriously injured**

### **More than 9 in 10 pet owners back crackdown on sale and use**

Senior vets at [Vets Now](#), the UK's leading provider of pet emergency care, are calling for fireworks to be banned from public sale.

They are urging the government to change the law amid concern that pets are being put at risk, especially around bonfire night.

Their calls come in the wake of Sainsbury's decision to stop selling fireworks from all of its 2,300 stores.

In a poll carried out by Vets Now, 96% of more than 7000 respondents said they would support tighter controls on fireworks while 73% said their pets were scared of the noise they create.

Vets Now's network of clinics and hospitals regularly treats pets who have been involved in accidents after being spooked by fireworks.

Welsh terrier Taffy was so petrified of the loud bangs from rockets he darted away from his owners onto a busy road.

Robert Lomas said his dog was dragged under a car and needed emergency veterinary treatment at Vets Now in Manchester to survive the ordeal.

Robert added: "It was so traumatic. I was really upset and shaken up. I tried to get him into the house, but he was urinating blood and I panicked.

"The past few years have been an absolute nightmare for fireworks. I'd definitely support moves to restrict sales, license displays and reduce the decibel level."

Meanwhile, West Highland terrier Archie ended up in a bloodbath after the stress of fireworks caused an abscess to rupture.

He was rushed to Vets Now in Ilford, where vet surgeons got to work on stemming the bleeding and cleaning up his wounds.

Archie's owner, Anne Jackson, said: "What happened to Archie was just awful. He's been part of our family since he was eight weeks old.

"I would hate for any other dog to suffer like he did and anything that can be done to change the law to help protect animals from fireworks gets my support."

Amanda Boag, clinical director at Vets Now, called on the government to do more to prevent irresponsible use of fireworks.

She said: "Fireworks can be hugely distressing for pets when they're let off unexpectedly.

"They are also too noisy and too easily available. To reduce the distress caused to pets we urgently need a review of fireworks regulations to prevent supermarkets and other retailers from selling them for private use.

"We'd also like to see their use restricted to licensed public events, which are well publicised in advance, around traditional dates only."

Several countries, including Ireland, have banned the sale of private-use fireworks because of concerns over their impact on people, pets, livestock and wildlife.

One recent consultation, commissioned by the Scottish Government, found strong support for tighter controls and restrictions, with most people wanting fireworks used only at organised displays.

The call to change the law so fireworks are less frightening for animals is backed by the RSPCA and pressure group Fireworks Abatement Campaign.

Julie Doorne, who founded FAB and has been lobbying for tougher laws on fireworks for more than four years, said: "I'm delighted Vets Now has joined us in calling for much stricter legislation on fireworks.

"The existing law does not protect animals or vulnerable people. We are sick and tired of seeing and hearing stories about animals and people suffering because of the use of fireworks.

"It is high time the government and MPs listened to the people on this issue and urgently reviewed firework regulations. It is the only way to prevent any needless distress or suffering."

All of Vets Now's out-of-hours clinics and 24/7 hospitals have a vet and vet nurse on-site at all times.

-ENDS-

**Notes to editors:**

For Taffy's story, please see attached which details his ordeal in full.

**For additional expert comment, further information or high-resolution images, please contact:**

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**Vets Now notes to editor:**

- Vets Now was established in 2001 and is the leading provider of emergency veterinary care for companion animals in the UK.
- With 24/7 Pet Emergency Hospitals in Glasgow, Manchester and Swindon, and 59 out-of-hours clinics nationwide, Vets Now is committed to delivering a responsive emergency and critical care service for cats, dogs and other small animals.
- Vets Now also partners with more than 1,400 veterinary practices across the UK to provide their clients with a seamless out-of-hours emergency care service.

- Vets Now employs over 1000 staff.
- Vets Now remains at the forefront of emergency veterinary care through its commitment to clinical excellence and training, employing many of the country's top Emergency & Critical Care Specialists.