

VETERINARY IRELAND PRESS RELEASES

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Minister Gormley Urged to Review Legislation for the Control of Dogs

The Minister for the Environment, John Gormley, TD, is again being urged by Veterinary Ireland, the representative body for Veterinary Surgeons in Ireland, to legislate at the earliest opportunity for the compulsory microchipping of all dogs.

“All dogs can be aggressive and dangerous if provoked, fearful or not socialised properly”, according to Ciara Feeney, Chairperson of the Veterinary Ireland Companion Animal Society (VICAS), “but responsibility must lie with dog owners and keepers to ensure that the activities of their dogs do not adversely affect other people living in the community”.

“Certain breeds of dogs, on account of their size, bite force or genetically enhanced aggression, can, if they do attack, kill or seriously injure human beings”, she said, “but the outright banning of such breeds is not the answer”.

“VICAS members have been working hard with other stakeholders on the Irish stray dog problem, in order to minimise the number of euthanisations of strays that take place each year, and in the same context we would be opposed to having to euthanase healthy, responsibly owned animals, who have not behaved aggressively - one potential effect of such a ban”.

Veterinary Ireland has already urged the Minister to initiate urgent action for universal micro-chipping and other related changes to legislation which will encourage more responsible dog ownership and will have a positive effect on a wide range of dog-related issues.

“Microchipping would allow easier monitoring of the so-called dangerous breeds of dog and would reduce the number of incidents such as we have seen in the news recently. There would also likely be a significant reduction in the number of stray dogs being destroyed in Ireland’s dog pounds, as a higher proportion of animals could be successfully reunited with owners” she said.

Veterinary Ireland are calling on the Minister for the Environment to review the Control of Dogs Act and other relevant legislation, to include the microchipping of all dogs and to increase funding to the Local Authorities to police these laws.

“Veterinary Ireland representatives are eager and willing to meet the Minister to discuss these matters in full at the earliest opportunity” Miss Feeney concluded.