

SHG Press Release

RSPCA figures misrepresent the facts

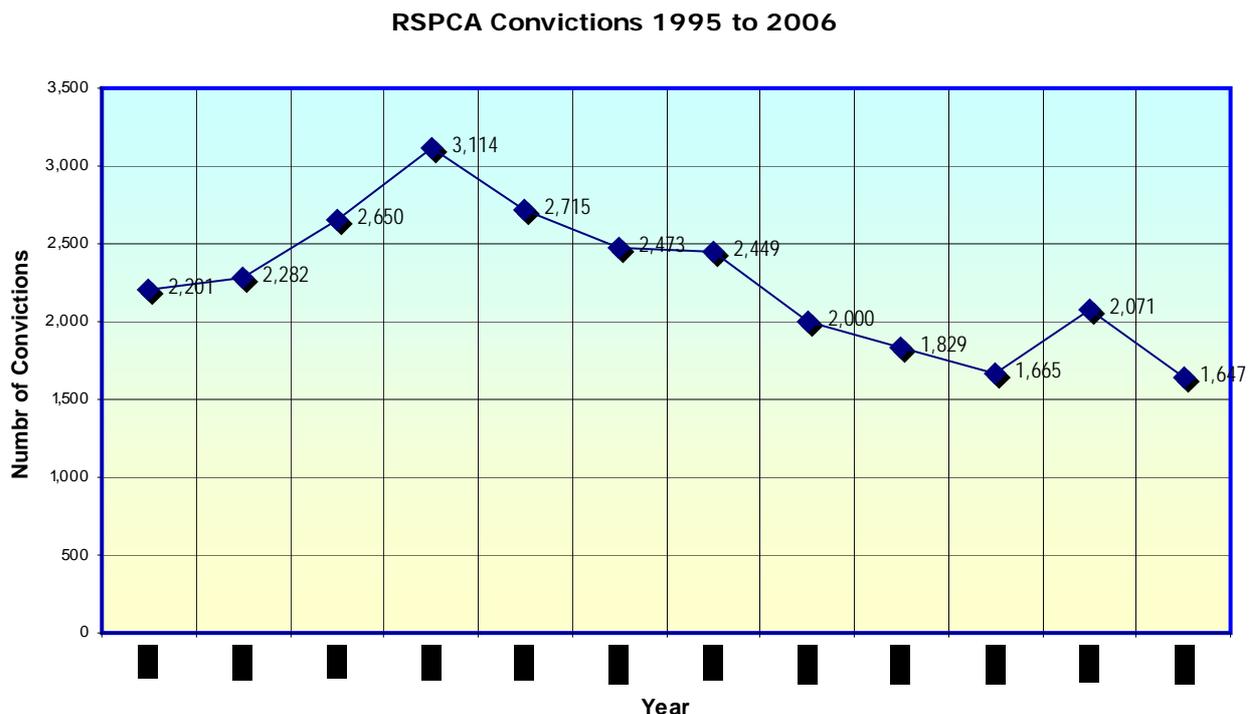
Statement from **The Self Help Group for Farmers, Pet Owners and Others experiencing difficulties with the RSPCA** (The SHG):

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

6th August 2007

Anyone who has seen the figures recently released by the RSPCA would believe that the introduction of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 has caused a 20% drop in convictions when comparing the years 2005/6.

A glance at the graph below shows this to be completely untrue. Conviction rates have been falling steadily since 1998. The exception to this trend was the dramatic rise in 2005 followed by a return to steady falls as reflected in the 2006 figure.



Said Anne Kasica of the SHG: “The real effect of the Animal Welfare Act has not been to drive conviction rates down, but to increase the numbers of animals given up by people, something the RSPCA have admitted they were not expecting, and yet this increase was predicted in paragraph three of the **Memorandum submitted by the SHG to the Select Committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs** during the consultations on the Animal Welfare Bill,

“The result of this legislation will be to reduce the number of people prepared to keep animals of any kind because they have privacy concerns and because they are not prepared to put themselves at risk of attracting the attention of the RSPCA whose unlawful activities are well documented, and who are feared by many animal keepers”

Ernest Vine of the SHG said: “What we really need to know is what caused the dramatic rise in convictions during 2005. Did the massive publicity the RSPCA received during the run up to the introduction of the Animal Welfare Act have an affect on the decisions made by Magistrates? If so, this illustrates the dangers of allowing a politically campaigning organisation to bring prosecutions without the sort of scrutiny and checks imposed on police investigations by the Crown Prosecution Service.”

“Far too often legislation supported by the RSPCA that is intended to improve animal welfare has a detrimental effect and actually discourages people from keeping animals.”

“The SHG believes that if the government were to introduce an NHS for the animals of pensioners it would do more to reduce animals suffering than all of the animal welfare legislation that has been passed while this government has been in power.

Notes to Editors: -

References

Surrey Advertiser - ‘Horrific’ animal cruelty cases rise

http://www.surreyad.co.uk/news/2013/2013462/horrific_animal_cruelty_cases_rise

Paragraph 3

House of Commons - Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - Minutes of Evidence

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmenvfru/52/4101313.htm>

Dramatic rise in unwanted pets | Metro.co.uk

http://www.metro.co.uk/news/article.html?in_article_id=46224&in_page_id=34

The Citizen – Animal Cruelty Cases Fall

http://www.prestoncitizen.co.uk/news/headlines/display.var.1584342.0.animal_cruelty_cases_fall.php

SHG Press Release - RSPCA Cruelty figures at a ten year low

<http://the-shg.org/SHGPressReleases.htm>

For further comment please contact Anne Kasica on 01559 371031 or Ernest Vine on 01559 370566. Mobile 07719 367148. e-mail: shg@the-shg.org

The SHG was officially formed in June 1990 and has been helping people to defend themselves and their animals from the RSPCA ever since. The national help line number is **08700 72 66 89**

A copy of this and previous press releases from The SHG are online at <http://www.the-shg.org/SHGPressReleases.htm>

Background information on the Self Help Group for Farmers Pet Owners and Other Experiencing Difficulties with the RSPCA can be found at <http://www.the-shg.org>

Details of further criticisms of the RSPCA can be found at the RSPCA-Animadversion website: <http://cheetah.webtribe.net/~animadversion>

ENDS