

# UK Puppy Market Welfare Intelligence

Understanding the scale of online puppy sales and  
compliance gaps

DATA FROM 10 PLATFORMS · 59,146 DOGS · JANUARY 2026

# Continuous market visibility



## Scale

Size of the puppy market

## Sellers

Who's breeding, where

## Compliance

License and welfare gaps

# Questions answered — for advocacy

## How big is the market?

Total puppies sold online per year

## Who are the high-volume sellers?

Breeders with 3+ listings

## What % are licensed?

Compliance with breeding regulations

## Is Lucy's Law enforced?

8-week rule by platform

## Where are the hotspots?

Geographic breeding concentrations

## Which platforms enforce rules?

Platform accountability comparison

# From data to action



## Market reports

Quarterly market sizing and trends



## Enforcement leads

Unlicensed high-volume sellers



## Geographic hotspots

Areas for LA investigation



## Platform scorecards

Accountability comparison



## Policy evidence

Data for regulatory advocacy



## Deep dives

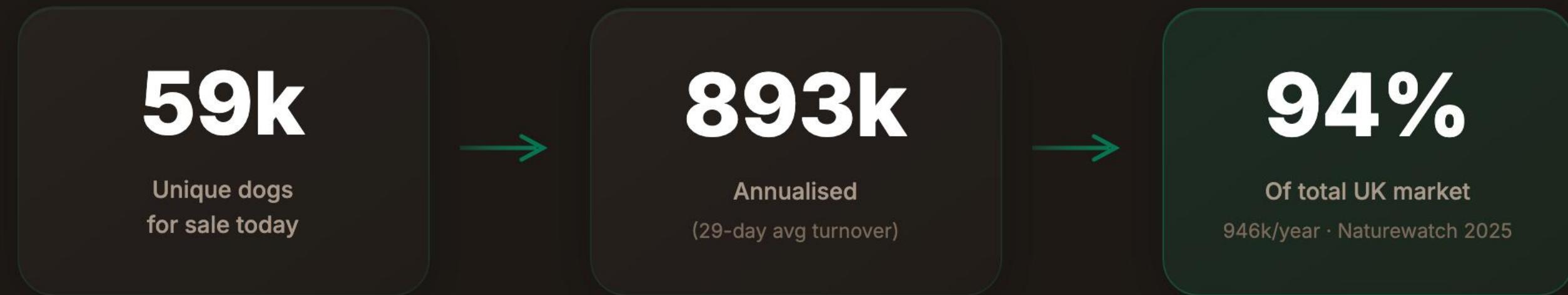
Breed-specific or regional analysis

JANUARY 2026 SNAPSHOT

# Current state of the UK puppy market

Data from 10 platforms, 59,146 dogs

# 94% of all dogs sold in the UK are listed on an online marketplace



10 MARKETPLACES ANALYSED

Pets4Homes

FreeAds

Gumtree

Preloved

Puppies.co.uk

Kennel Club

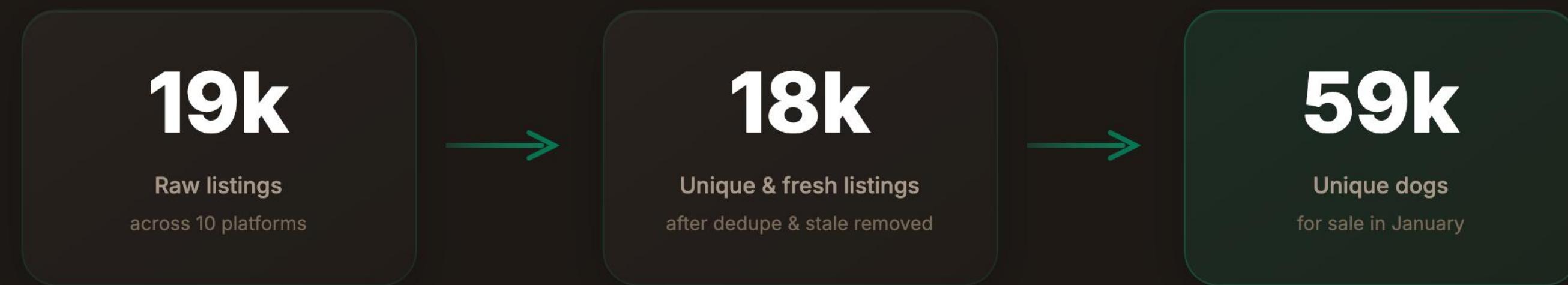
Petify

ForeverPuppy

Champdogs

Gundogs Direct

# After deduplication and freshness checks, **18k listings** translate to **59k dogs**



**-368** Duplicates removed

Within-platform  
Cross-platform

-65  
-303

**-569** Stale removed

Listings older than 6 months removed as  
likely sold or inactive.

**×3.23** Dogs per listing

Most ads are litter listings with multiple  
puppies available, not single dogs.

# Specialist pet sites list **litters**, not individual dogs

PLATFORM	RAW LISTINGS	RAW DOGS	DOGS/LISTING
Pets4Homes	7,617	31,312	4.1
FreeAds	6,551	14,258	2.2
Gumtree	1,758	4,450	2.5
Preloved	654	893	1.4
ForeverPuppy	630	2,529	4.0
Petify	603	3,315	5.5
Puppies.co.uk	575	1,750	3.0
Kennel Club	411	2,453	6.0
Gundogs Direct	356	378	1.1
Champdogs	162	972	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,317</b>	<b>62,310</b>	<b>3.2</b>

**50%**

**Pets4Homes share**  
Of all dogs listed  
across 10 platforms

**4.1**

**Pet specialists avg**  
Litter-based listings  
(P4H, KC, Petify...)

**2.4**

**Classifieds avg**  
Individual dogs  
(FreeAds, Gumtree...)

# Only 29% of high-volume sellers display a breeding license

## UK LAW: BREEDING LICENSE REQUIREMENT

**3+** Listings per year requires a license

Under the Animal Welfare Regulations 2018, anyone breeding 3+ litters per year must hold a local authority license.

## THE COMPLIANCE GAP

**109**

Unlicensed high-volume sellers

No license displayed on profile

## LICENSE TRACKING BY PLATFORM

PLATFORM	HV SELLERS	TRACKING	LICENSED
Pets4Homes	54	Yes	81%
Preloved	8	Yes	25%
FreeAds	74	None	0%



## TOP UNLICENSED SELLERS

1	justdogz	9	FreeAds
2	marta.sobkowiak9911	7	FreeAds
3	jollydog	5	FreeAds

# 63% of Gumtree listings are under 7 days old — freshest by far

## MEDIAN LISTING AGE BY PLATFORM



## AGE DISTRIBUTION

Platform	<7D	7-30D	30-90D	>90D
Gumtree	63%	37%	0%	0%
Pets4Homes	15%	45%	38%	2%
FreeAds	27%	20%	39%	7%
ForeverPuppy	4%	24%	61%	2%
Preloved	5%	22%	43%	31%
Puppies.co.uk	1%	22%	38%	39%
Gundogs Direct	8%	17%	31%	43%
Petify	2%	4%	17%	71%

### Petify — Unusual Pattern

71% of listings over 90 days old, yet puppies average 13 weeks. Ages may be frozen or listings refreshed with new litters.

# 80-100% of listings are puppies under 1 year — Preloved & Gundogs Direct skew adult

## AGE DISTRIBUTION BY PLATFORM



## KEY INSIGHTS

**~80%**

The big 3 marketplaces (P4H, Gumtree, FreeAds) are 72-86% puppies under 1 year old

**100%**

Kennel Club, ForeverPuppy and Champdogs are puppy-only platforms

**40-62%**

Preloved and Gundogs Direct skew adult — rehoming and trained working dogs

■ <8 weeks ■ 8-12 weeks ■ 3-6 months ■ 6-12 months ■ Adult (>1yr)

# 97-100% of under-8-week puppies on Gumtree & P4H have future ready-to-leave dates

## UK LAW: 8-WEEK MINIMUM

**8 Weeks minimum age**  
Under the Animal Welfare Regulations 2018 (Lucy's Law), puppies cannot leave their mother before 8 weeks. Early separation causes behavioural issues, anxiety, and health problems. Platforms should enforce future ready-to-leave dates for young puppies.

## READY-TO-LEAVE ENFORCEMENT

PLATFORM	<8WK	PROTECTED	%
Gumtree	516	Enforced	100%
Pets4Homes	2,433	Enforced	97%
FreeAds	559	Optional	4%

## HOW PLATFORMS PROTECT PUPPIES

### Pets4Homes & Gumtree

Mandatory ready-to-leave field. 100% of under-8-week puppies have future dates set. Buyers cannot collect early.

### FreeAds Gap

559 puppies under 8 weeks — 96% have no ready date. Of those with dates, many say "Now". Field is optional with no enforcement.

# French Bulldog is most popular with 3,675 dogs — Irish Wolfhound commands highest prices at £3,000

TOP 10 BREEDS BY DOGS FOR SALE

#	BREED	DOGS	%
1	French Bulldog	3,675	6.5%
2	Labrador Retriever	3,639	6.5%
3	Cockapoo	3,300	5.9%
4	Miniature Dachshund	3,177	5.6%
5	Cocker Spaniel	3,065	5.4%
6	German Shepherd	2,084	3.7%
7	Dachshund	1,812	3.2%
8	Cane Corso	1,601	2.8%
9	Staffordshire Bull Terrier	1,429	2.5%
10	Chihuahua	1,162	2.1%

MOST EXPENSIVE BREEDS (AVG PRICE)

#	BREED	DOGS	PRICE
1	Irish Wolfhound	59	£3,000
2	Bernedoodle	98	£2,500
3	Italian Greyhound	120	£2,400
4	Pekingese	59	£2,350
5	Australian Labradoodle	128	£2,250
6	Old English Sheepdog	68	£2,225
7	Australian Shepherd	79	£2,125
8	Miniature Goldendoodle	75	£2,050
9	Boxer	296	£2,000
10	Dachshund (Miniature Long)	111	£2,000

# Wisbech emerges as a breeder hotspot — a small town ranking #8 nationwide for dogs listed

TOP 10 CITIES BY DOGS LISTED

#	CITY	DOGS	LISTINGS
1	London	869	267
2	Doncaster	809	238
3	Manchester	766	240
4	Birmingham	691	252
5	Liverpool	657	205
6	Nottingham	591	172
7	Leeds	566	259
8	Wisbech	562	150
9	Sheffield	447	145
10	Hull	424	141

TOP 5 REGIONS BY DOGS LISTED

#	REGION	DOGS	LISTINGS
1	West Midlands	1,685	482
2	Greater London	1,641	456
3	South Yorkshire	1,336	352
4	West Yorkshire	1,317	381
5	Kent	1,095	301



## Wisbech Breeder Hotspot

Small town (pop. 35k) with 3 of UK's top sellers

**Ritchie** — 11 listings, Bulldogs, P4H (licensed)

**justdogz** — 9 listings, Cockapoos, FreeAds

**Zoe** — 5 listings, Mixed, P4H (licensed)

# Key findings for welfare advocacy

**70%**

## Unlicensed high-volume sellers

109 of 155 sellers with 3+ listings have no displayed license

**4%**

## FreeAds Lucy's Law gap

559 puppies under 8 weeks with minimal protection

**46%**

## Concentrated on FreeAds

Nearly half of all high-volume sellers use the platform with least oversight

**Wisbech**

## Geographic hotspot

Small town #8 nationwide for dogs — potential enforcement target

Platform accountability + local authority enforcement = key levers for change

# Recommended actions

## For Platforms

- Mandate license display for 3+ listings
- Enforce ready-to-leave dates
- Share data with local authorities

## For Local Authorities

- Investigate geographic hotspots
- Cross-reference listings with license records
- Prioritise unlicensed high-volume sellers

## For Charities

- Publish platform accountability scores
- Support FreeAds regulatory pressure
- Educate buyers on red flags

This analysis can be repeated monthly to track progress and identify new patterns. Data collection is fully automated.

# Data-driven advocacy for animal welfare

Quantifying the problem to target solutions

UK Puppy Market Welfare Intelligence

January 2026