

# GREYHOUND RACING: HARMLESS FUN?



## DON'T BET ON IT.

**A flutter, a wager, a punt, a bet; a night at the dogs or trip down the bookies is just a bit of harmless fun, right? For the dogs themselves there's more at stake than your cash.**

What you don't see trackside or in the betting shops are the thousands of greyhounds that are unaccounted for every year. Some go missing as puppies because they are too slow or shy for the tracks. Other adult dogs that were once racers lose their speed after a few years and disappear - the majority of them are presumed dead.

### **THE PROBLEM WITH COMMERCIAL GREYHOUND RACING**

The Associate Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare reported in 2007 that 4,728 greyhounds disappear from racing in Britain every year and stated that "... we can assume that the majority of these dogs are destroyed." They also noted that it considered the figure to be a conservative estimate.

# ITS A DOG'S LIFE.

The life of a racing greyhound can be a far cry from the loving homes that many of the UK's dogs live in today. Some racing greyhounds are not treated as part of any family - they are bred and raised to make money for the racing and betting industries.



Greyhounds can live to be 14 years old, but most lose their speed between the ages of 3 to 5. This leaves trainers with many unwanted dogs due to the large number leaving the industry each year.

One prominent case of the slaughter of ex-racing dogs involved the killing of greyhounds, possibly thousands, in Seaham, County Durham, which was exposed by the national media in 2006.

Some "retired" racing greyhounds are lucky and manage to get rehomed after an expensive process. According to the Dogs Trust, it usually costs around £700 to rehabilitate a racing greyhound and make the dog suitable for adoption. The racing industry gives £1.7 million to the Retired

Greyhound Trust. Although this may sound like a lot our calculations show that the industry would need another £3.3million to rehome the 4,728 dogs that are unaccounted for each year.

Registered racing greyhounds have tattoos in their ears as a means of identifying them and tracing their owners. There have been cases where greyhounds have been found abandoned or dead with their ears cut off, and this is thought to be done to prevent those responsible from being indentified.

IT IS OUR VIEW THAT MOST OF THESE PROBLEMS STEM FROM THE ENORMOUS SUMS OF MONEY AT STAKE. £2.5 BILLION IN BETS ARE PLACED ON GREYHOUND RACING EVERY YEAR. WE FEEL WHENEVER PROFIT BECOMES THE PRIMARY FOCUS THE ANIMALS CAN BECOME SEEN AS JUST A BUSINESS ASSET AND THEIR WELFARE SUFFERS. FOR THIS REASON WE ARE ASKING THAT BETTING ON GREYHOUND RACING IS DONE AWAY WITH.

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## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- PLEASE DON'T SUPPORT COMMERCIAL GREYHOUND TRACKS. THERE ARE PLENTY OF OTHER PLACES TO GO FOR A GOOD NIGHT OUT THAT DON'T INVOLVE RACING DOGS.
- DON'T BET ON GREYHOUND RACING. DISTRIBUTE THESE LEAFLETS TO FAMILY, FRIENDS AND WORK COLLEAGUES. IF YOU DO WANT TO BET ON A SPORTING EVENT, GO FOR ONE THAT INVOLVES HUMAN ATHLETES LIKE FOOTBALL.
- GET INVOLVED WITH A LOCAL GROUP WORKING ON THIS ISSUE. YOU CAN FIND A LIST OF GREYHOUND ACTION GROUPS HERE:  
[WWW.GREYHOUNDACTION.ORG.UK/GREYHOUND.HTML](http://WWW.GREYHOUNDACTION.ORG.UK/GREYHOUND.HTML)
- GIVE A GREYHOUND A LOVING HOME. FIND A LIST OF RESCUE GROUPS HERE:  
[WWW.GREYHOUNDRESCUE.CO.UK](http://WWW.GREYHOUNDRESCUE.CO.UK)