



**Animal Protection Agency**

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## **Hammer comes down on illegal bird auction**

The Animal Protection Agency (APA), a national organisation campaigning against the trade in wild animals for pets, has come down hard on Bournemouth Borough Council for allowing an illegal bird auction this Sunday 30th January. Advertisements for the event, which is to take place at the Kinson Community Centre, invite members of the public to “bring your spare birds and we’ll sell them for you”. However, each sale that takes place will constitute a criminal offence.

In 1983, auctions and sales of pet animals in public places were outlawed, but Bournemouth BC seems set to remain behind the times. The Council has so far even refused to advise the organisers and the venue of the law relating to the bird auction - as clearly they remain confused about what action to take. This is despite being provided with clear legal guidance from the Animal Protection Agency.

The Kinson Community Centre, managed by a charitable association, was also given legal guidance by APA and also informed of the health and safety risks associated with hosting events involving exotic birds. They were informed that many exotic birds carry diseases that are easily transmissible to people and after the event the Community Centre is still likely to present a risk to the visiting public. Those particularly at risk include children under five, pregnant woman the elderly and people with compromised immune systems. Eating and other close contact with the Centre's facilities, such as touching walls and door handles, harbours the risk of contamination at the venue after the bird auction has taken place.

Says Elaine Toland, Director of APA;  
“We are staggered that a local authority could act so irresponsibly. Halting Sunday’s event would have been a straightforward matter, especially as the Community Centre is council-owned. Bournemouth BC has seemingly decided, however, that to do nothing is the easy option. We have already requested from them their full legal rationale to their actions – or, in this case, inactions!”

Bournemouth BC is obliged to be in attendance at Sunday’s auction in order to gather evidence for prosecution. APA will be seeking feedback regarding this and also a commitment from Bournemouth BC that no further illegal pet sales will take place within its jurisdiction.

\* For more information, please contact Elaine Toland on 01273 674253

\* We have an ISDN line for broadcast quality interviews

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