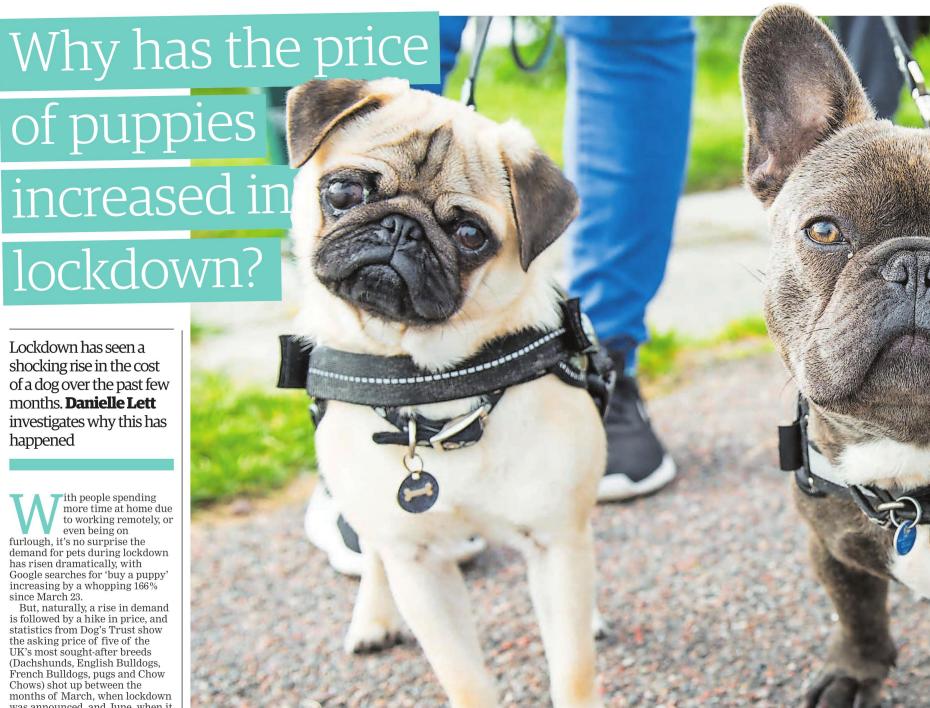
Friday, August 21, 2020 | East Anglian Daily Times



months of March, when lockdown was announced, and June, when it began to ease.

One of the most expensive breeds, English Bulldogs, were advertised for as much as £2,140 on average in June, compared to an average price of £1,637 back in March – with some listings reaching as high as £9,000.

A Dachshund back in March would cost on average £973, but went up in price by 89% in June, costing £1,838, and pugs have gone up by 56% during lockdown, costing £684 in March and rising to £1,064 only a few months later. Both Chow Chows and French

Bulldogs have similarly seen a £700 increase between March and June – but why such a drastic jump in such a short space of

Many breeders have justified the rise in their prices, and have done so in order to sift out any potential buyers who may be looking to get a new dog on a

One north Suffolk-based professional dog breeder, who did

not wish to be named, said: "One of the bonuses is that if somebody is prepared to pay say £3,000 for a puppy, it gives you 100% commitment that they're going to look after that dog.
"I've been doing this for over 25

years, and have always said if someone's prepared to pay the price, they're going to look after that dog. If you're a responsible owner, you're going to keep an eye on that dog, and give it a good home and the best life."

While raising prices may seem like a good idea in deterring anyone who is looking to buy a dog on impulse, others argue that such practices can in fact lead to problems such as dog thefts.

One east Suffolk-based professional dog breeder, who also did not wish to be named, decided against raising its prices - and is

instead heavily vetting each of its applicants, which has resulted in an exceptionally long waiting list. They said: "Within a couple of weeks of lockdown, our waiting list enquires went ballistic - we are now full until the spring of 2022, with people still joining. The public are buying from wherever they can though, and that's the problem. Where we have refused to join in and up our prices. integrity and openness is what makes us have a huge waiting list and there is no way I would put years of hard work aside to make a bigger, quick profit.

"Selling pups for elevated prices is driving the daily theft of pups, young dogs, mature dogs, and whole litters of pups with or without their mothers. In some instances, dog walkers are even being mugged for their pets, so

dog owners need to be aware. Don't leave your dog in your garden unattended, watch out for suspicious vehicles, look out for chalk marks on your drive or window frames, and padlock everything you can." Whether you agree or disagree

with the hike in dog prices, breeders and charities can all agree that lockdown will no doubt unfortunately lead to a sharp rise in the number of dogs being handed over to shelters.

Experts from Dog's Trust have said that in the coming months

and even years, more dogs than ever are at risk of relinquishment – and it estimates that up to 40,000 dogs could potentially be abandoned, following on from the subsequent fallout of the coronavirus crisis.

"I have been told that rescue

centres are getting ready for the influx of lockdown pups when people eventually realise the hard work it really entails, and what seemed like a good idea at the time really isn't. It's very depressing to be honest. I am lucky the people on my list for the next 12 months are people who we have already met before Covid, and the rest I will meet before they come anywhere near one of my pups," added the east Suffolk-based breeder

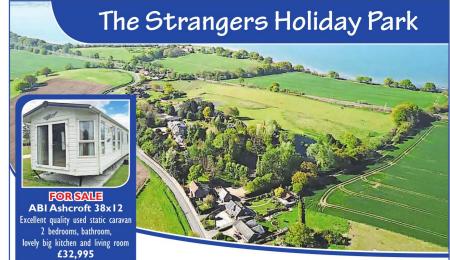
Are you someone who paid a higher price for a dog during lockdown, or have you decided to wait until prices drop again, and why? Are you shocked at how much prices have risen over the past few months? Get in touch with danielle.lett@archant.co.uk to share your story.

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Feature







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