



Joshua Wanless

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Walton man sentenced for forcing dog to kill ferret and breaching CBO

A man who encouraged a dog to kill a ferret and breached a Criminal Behaviour Order by being in Walton has been sentenced.

Joshua Wanless, aged 28, of Pankhurst Road, Walton pleaded guilty and was sentenced at Staines Magistrates Court on Tuesday (May 21).

On January 30 this year officers were called to Apple Court Green in Walton after a report that Wanless had forced a dog into a cage with a ferret to kill it.

Officers arrived as Wanless drove into an adjacent road, Sunnyside, where they searched his car. In the boot they found a box with a live ferret, a cage covered in blood and a dog with blood on its nose. On the green they also found the ferret that had been killed by the dog minutes beforehand.

Wildlife & Rural Crime Co-ordinator PC Hollie Iribar, who investigated the case alongside PC Josh Parry, said: "This is an abhorrent crime which involved Joshua Wanless antagonising a dog to kill a ferret for no other reason than his own enjoyment.

"He denied the offences at the time and told officers at the scene that the ferret had escaped from its box and been killed by accident, but subsequent investigation of his mobile phone revealed text messages stating his cruel intention beforehand.

"Using dogs to commit crimes in this way is disgusting. We know that crimes such as organised dog fighting are linked to serious criminal networks where it is sadly viewed as a sport. Bringing offenders to justice for such barbaric activity is just another way we can disrupt organised criminals from committing other kinds of serious crime."

Wanless pleaded guilty at Staines Magistrates Court on May 21, to two breaches of his Criminal Behaviour Order. The breaches being that he caused alarm or distress to another member of the public and entered an area he was not allowed in.

He also pleaded guilty to causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal, a ferret, by feeding it to a dog and causing it to die, and causing unnecessary suffering to a dog by encouraging the dog to attack a ferret.

He received a 16 week sentence, suspended for two years, was also ordered to carry out 180 hours of unpaid work in the next 12 months, told to pay a victim surcharge of £115 and costs of £85. He was also banned from owning or keeping all animals for two years.

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