

## Rutland and Stamford Mercury **Property raided over badger baiting**

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Police and animal welfare officers have searched several properties under warrants as part of a badger baiting investigation.

A number of seriously injured dogs were removed for further examination during the raids.

The Scottish SPCA carried out the searches with Strathclyde Police in Lanarkshire.

The charity said its inquiries are continuing and that it will submit a report to the procurator fiscal.

Those involved in badger baiting dig out the animals' sets and either send dogs in or pull the badger out and force it to fight with a dog.

The searches are part of Operation Meles, a UK-wide investigation into badger baiting.

In a statement, the Scottish SPCA said: "This investigation was the culmination of lengthy enquiries into allegations of organised badger baiting and animal fighting.

Similar raids have been conducted during a co-ordinated plan throughout Northern Ireland, England and Wales.

"Badger baiting continues to be a clandestine activity which is extremely difficult to detect and bring perpetrators forward for prosecution.

"Cruelty and suffering in the so-called blood sport often results in horrendous injuries to both badgers and dogs."

The charity urged anyone with information about such activities to contact it.

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